

IN THESE TIMES

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PUBLIC GOES PRIVATE
THROUGH FRANCO-
REAGANOMICS ♦ DIANA
JOHNSTONE REPORTS P.9

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Linda Brown

Connecticut state Rep. Miles Rapaport, Citizen Action Director Heather Booth, WAC Director Jeff Eagan, Maryland state representative candidate Ken Montague.

How far will populists go?

By David Moberg

CHICAGO

Ronald Reagan recently predicted that the left in the U.S. would soon be buried. But no wake was apparent when nearly 1,200 participants in the Citizen Action network of 25 statewide political organizations gathered for their annual retreat here at the end of July. An evolving political hybrid, Citizen Action is today the largest, most effective grassroots force on the left in American politics. And it continues to grow, mature and frequently win both at the ballot box and in the legislature (such as more than quadrupling Reagan's original proposed reauthorization for the Superfund toxic cleanup).

Even the groups' faults and shortcomings often reflect their dynamism as they attempt to forge a political philosophy, define issues and policies and build mass organization that can lead toward, as this year's theme stated, "a progressive majority."

The statewide building blocks—typified by Connecticut Citizens Action Group (CCAG), Illinois Public Action Council (IPAC) and Pennsylvania Public Action Coalition (PennPIC)—are coalitions of unions, community groups and organizations with bases among farmers, seniors, consumers and minorities. They have fought against utility rate hikes or other abuses, energy deregulation, toxic wastes, farm foreclosures and plant closings and fought for consumer rights and reform of taxes or insurance. They have received comparatively little publicity because they have focused on state and local politics out of the Washington political media spotlight.

THE STORY INSIDE

A few groups originally tried to build fresh membership organizations, but that proved too costly. Now nearly all reach supporters through young door-to-door canvassers, who quickly mention a popular issue and solicit support, especially money. These Fuller Brush-style fundraisers reach 12 million people every year with their pitch, an unparalleled, if often very shallow, direct political connection. (Now organizers are trying to figure out ways to build and enrich these tenuous ties.)

Building blocks

Starting in 1980, Citizen Action tentatively edged into electoral politics. Candidates soon learned to love the canvass, a partial counterweight to opponents' big bucks. This year Citizen Action involvement has doubled since 1984 to 200 races, 140 of which are state and local offices. Nearly 40 candidates have been recruited from the ranks of Citizen Action organizations. In states like Connecticut, Citizen Action affiliates are fighting an entrenched, conservative Democratic Party; in Wisconsin, they push against a mushy centrist mass; in other states they have deeply penetrated the party. (In Illinois a former IPAC political director is the new state Democratic executive director and an IPAC ally is state chairman.)

Citizen Action, after contributing heavily in 1984 to victories by Sens. Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Paul Simon (D-IL), is working hard on many Senate races this year, including those of Ed Garvey in Wisconsin—who claimed his campaign in large part started with the inspiration of last year's Citizen Action retreat—and Bob Edgar in Pennsylvania. But besides aiding "progressive populist" candidates—last year "populism" was adopted as a political label, but it turns out to have many negative associations, unlike "progressive"—Citizen Action is working for and even recruiting future left leaders like Vincent Hughes. He is a young black union

member who became a PennPIC leader and upset an 18-year black incumbent in a state legislative race this year.

This immersion in realpolitik necessarily creates tensions. For example, legislators discussed the special problems of maintaining their principles while engaging in legislative infighting at one workshop. And one Wisconsin candidate—hailed as a Citizen Action exemplar—is not even being supported by Wisconsin Action Coalition (WAC), because unions in the state continue to endorse his moderate Democratic opponent who votes right on narrow labor issues. In California, the erstwhile Campaign for Economic Democracy formed to support Tom Hayden has jettisoned any semblance of anti-corporate values in favor of non-ideological politics and the worship of entrepreneurs. Campaign California, as it is now called, has compromised more than most in search of electoral victory. Other groups see a need to agitate on issues as much as win elections, a point repeatedly emphasized by elected officials.

Until now Citizen Action has mainly reflected an organized, traditional working and "middle-class" constituency—the Democratic Party segment symbolized by Walter Mondale and Gov. Mario Cuomo of New York. But Heather Booth, the founder of Midwest Academy—a training center at the heart of the network—and co-chair of Citizen Action, argues that the Democratic majority Citizen Action wants to build must include two other major constituencies: the "locked-out," predominately minority, poor people symbolized by Jesse Jackson, and the "new collar," younger but not affluent two-income households of service, clerical and technical workers who usually have no organizational loyalties or ties. These "marginal middles" are often sympathetic to Sen. Gary Hart.

Courting support

Both Hart and Jackson addressed the retreat (Cuomo declined), and the groups are earnestly debating what relationship, if any, to have with these leaders. Despite enthusiasm for Jackson's issues and ideas and the desire to recruit more black leaders and followers to Citizen Action, many state leaders are wary of maintaining too close a connection to Jackson. Some problems: if the Rainbow Coalition is actually organized, there may be "turf" conflicts with established Citizen Action affiliates. Also, many existing grassroots followers in white neighborhoods are uneasy about Jackson. Finally, while alliance with Jackson over issues may be worth any of these frictions, Citizen Action leaders are concerned about what their alliance may imply about support for Jackson, the presidential candidate. Another major internal debate among leaders concerns the 1988 presidential race. Should Citizen Action endorse a candidate in the primary? Or leave that to each state group? And if it does act early, who can they support among the three constituencies?

"Our view is that all three are essential or we lose," Booth said. "We are concerned that the appeal to each one is designed to have the greatest appeal to all." But formulating an overall appeal that transcends and unites disparate groups is as difficult as it is essential. The Hart-Jackson-Cuomo divisions reflect some of the race, class, age and regional splits among potential Democrats. There are also deep political divisions that reflect the incredibly uneven economy: regions of deep depression looking for federal help coexist with other *laissez-faire* pockets of boom. (Usually, like Hayden's California entrepreneurs, those lucky winners have been nurtured by Reagan's military buildup.)

Midwest Academy teacher Steve Max argued that Citizen Action could bridge some of these differences with a strong pro-family emphasis. That might mean stressing day care and education. But many of their existing issues can be promoted as pro-family, and, as he insisted, leading the retreat in a mass chant, "The Republican Party is anti-family."

After years of issue organizing, Booth says Citizen Action leaders realize that "building an electoral majority is key." And that, above all else, involves demonstrating that Democrats can manage the economy, promoting growth as well as equity. Despite polls showing popular majorities on behalf of many liberal positions, most voters no longer trust the Democrats—few of whom even bother to stress their traditional bedrock issue of jobs—to run the economy. And most, despite their disagreements, believe that Reagan at least articulates many of their own inchoate frustrations and provides a political philosophy, however wrongheaded.

In shifting to issues like education, family and health care (the new campaign to be launched this fall), Citizen Action may reach "new collars" and a broader base. But focusing on "family" issues may not illuminate the source of people's problems—corporate power, according to PennPIC Executive Director Jeff Blum. For all its rapid growth and success in the legislature and the voting booth, PennPIC, like its counterparts, has often failed to reach people on the really heartfelt issues or especially on the economic crisis, Blum said. For a start, some of the traditional Citizen Action issues could be reconceptualized—or repackaged, to be cynical—as part of an economic program. Better education, utility reform, public capital expenditures and day care, for example, not only create jobs but also a better "business climate," one that most on the left could tolerate. Gary Hart's "strategic investment initiative" or "a new policy of investment in America" offers one model for packaging left issues as an economic program.

Yet ultimately Citizen Action must face—and organize its supporters to confront—what San Francisco Supervisor Harry Britt referred to as the concealed truths and contradictions beneath the much-maligned liberal tradition. And those involve the "distortions of power" and "tyranny of property" that are the foundation of American society.

[Harry Boyte, Heather Booth and Steve Max have written a short, heavily anecdotal and very accessible history of *Citizen Action and the New American Populism*, just published by Temple University Press. It gives a solid, upbeat sense of what the organizations have done and where they are heading.]



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IN THESE TIMES

In 1984 CDM members advised Mondale when he was contesting Hart for the Democratic nomination.



Steve Kagan

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON, D.C.

MOST DEMOCRATIC LEGISLATORS and voters oppose the Reagan administration's decision to prop up the *contra* rebels in Nicaragua. In the House vote on *contra* aid, 198 Democrats opposed it and only 51 supported it.

Public opinion polls show not only a majority of Democrats but a majority of all voters oppose the administration's Central America policies—by 54 to 40 percent according to an April Harris poll. Since 1974 Democratic primary voters have consistently supported doves over hawks—McGovern over Humphrey in 1972, Carter and Udall over Jackson in 1976 and Mondale, Hart and Jackson over Glenn, Askew and Hollings in 1984. Among the prospec-

What makes the Democrats right?

tive candidates for 1988—Hart, Cuomo, Gephardt, Biden and Jackson—not one has backed *contra* aid.

One would expect that the foreign policy positions of the Democratic National Committee (DNC), which is funded by Democratic voters, would reflect those of Democratic voters and legislators. But in two policy position papers released this summer, the DNC has bowed to the wishes of a narrow but powerful clique of Democratic Reaganites, led by the Coalition for a Democratic Majority (CDM).

Coalition for a Democratic Majority looks to a Hart-less future in 1988

The Coalition for a Democratic Majority (CDM) already has a presidential candidate for 1988; former Virginia Gov. Chuck Robb. He was a recipient this year of the organization's Henry M. Jackson award. But Robb has as good a chance of gaining the nomination as did former CDM favorite Henry Jackson and John Glenn. CDM's fallback candidate may be New Jersey Sen. Bill Bradley, who recently charmed CDM members by voting for *contra* aid.

Besides Jesse Jackson, the one candidate that CDM is deeply dissatisfied with is Colorado Sen. Gary Hart. Besides having been George McGovern's campaign manager in 1968, Hart has steadfastly refused to alter his positions to please CDM. This was apparent at a recent private meeting between Hart and Democratic journalists and activists. Advocates of CDM's line at the meeting battered Hart for an hour and a half, trying unsuccessfully to shake his opposition to Reagan administration foreign policy in Central America. Hart not only rejected *contra* aid but defended his opposition to the Reagan administration of Grenada. Hart insisted that military intervention had to be based on genuine threats to American na-

tional security.

Hart's major foreign policy address at Georgetown University in June did not win plaudits from CDM members. Even though Hart carefully explained his opposition to *contra* aid and laid out a series of conditions for American intervention abroad, CDM's Peter Rosenblatt believed Hart handled the subject superficially. "I don't think he dealt with the issue of intervention," Rosenblatt said.

In 1984 CDM members initially backed Ohio Sen. John Glenn, but then switched to former Vice President Walter Mondale when Glenn got knocked out of the race. They were able to win considerable influence with the pliable Mondale, who delegated CDM Chairman Ben Wattenberg to write the foreign policy speech he delivered in Chicago in March 1984, in which he attacked Hart for opposing American intervention in Central America.

If Hart or a Democrat of similar conviction is nominated in 1988, however, CDM members might have to do what some Washington observers expect that they will do eventually: follow Jeane Kirkpatrick and Norman Podhoretz into the Republican Party.

—J.B.J.

In the wake of George McGovern's 1972 primary victory, the CDM was founded by Cold War Democrats who wanted to wrest control of the party away from McGovern's supporters and nominate Washington Sen. Henry "Scoop" Jackson for president in 1976. Jackson had doggedly backed the war to the very end. CDM's founders, Penn Kemble and Ben Wattenberg, continue to speak for the organization. But other early members—including Jeane Kirkpatrick, Max Kampelman, Eugene Rostow, Richard Pipes, Norman Podhoretz and Midge Decator—have defected to the Republicans.

CDM is now the center of a network of Democrats and Republican neo-conservatives that extends from AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland and his top appointed lieutenants to the administration's National Endowment for Democracy, whose director Carl Gershman is a veteran of CDM and its sister organization, Social Democrats USA. Gershman has used the National Endowment to fund several network projects, including Prodemca, a pro-*contra* lobby that Kemble oversees.

CDM's most prominent congressional supporter is now Rep. Les Aspin, who recently appointed former CDM Director Jay Winnick as his top aide. The CDM's views are articulated through the media in Podhoretz' *Commentary*, the *American Spectator* and the *New Republic*, whose senior editor Charles Krauthammer is a CDM ally.

Dead center

For the last year, the Democratic National Committee has been organizing commissions and task forces on foreign and domestic policy to produce policy reports that presumably could be of some use in the 1986 and 1988 elections. Last year it commissioned reports by a Committee on Defense and Foreign Policy, chaired by Aspin, and by a Task Force on Foreign Policy, chaired by New York Rep. Stephen Solarz. Aspin's committee, the higher body, was supposed to incorporate the Solarz report into its own.

Last April when Solarz and former Kennedy aide Theodore Sorenson submitted a

draft of the report to Solarz' 33-person task force, CDM called a press conference in which they announced their own foreign policy task force and protested the report's opposition to administration foreign policy. "It talks about the world's problems as if they were mainly the creation of Ronald Reagan's rhetoric," Kemble said. CDM members singled out passages in the report criticizing the administration for "injudicious confrontation" in Central America and "puerile name-calling" with the Soviet Union.

Solarz responded that CDM's complaints were shared by only one member of his committee, CDM President Peter Rosenblatt, a well-heeled Washington lawyer. But

The DNC is bowing to the wishes of a powerful clique of Democratic Reaganites.

when the final report appeared June 26, the task force had fudged its opposition to *contra* aid and to what the first draft called the administration's "Rambo-like unilateralism." The change in passage on the *contras* was most significant. While the first draft had opposed aid unequivocally, the final draft merely offered amendments to its use. "We do not believe that peace, stability and human rights in Central America can be achieved by our simply continuing to arm and finance without qualification the Nicaraguan *contras*," the report said. "Nor do we believe that this administration has ever made clear what aims such aid is designed to achieve or why no U.S. diplomatic policy is in place to accompany this military policy."

Solarz aide Michael Lewan described the report as having gone "from being slightly left of center to pretty much dead center on the issues." But he defended the task force's capitulation to the CDM. The final draft, Lewan said, reflected the fact that the Democrats have differences on *contra* funding.

"We don't believe we ought to ride these guys out of the party," Lewan said. But

Continued on page 22

INSHORT

Rachel Sternberg

Lowering the curve

Do American politicians know anything? Late last month, a Baltimore TV station gave 17 Maryland candidates for the U.S. Senate a brief quiz on current affairs. The two candidates with the lowest scores—1.5 out of five—were the two who claimed to be the most knowledgeable: U.S. Rep. Michael D. Barnes (D-MD), a prominent member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and five-term U.S. Rep. Barbara A. Mikulski (D-MD). The highest score—four out of five—was achieved by former White House aide Linda Chavez, who is running in the Republican primary. Among the Democrats, the highest scorer was Debra Freeman, a follower of Lyndon LaRouche. Here are the five questions: (1) What terrorist incident sparked President Reagan's reprisal against Libya? (2) Who is prime minister of Israel now, and who will be in November? (3) How did Maryland rank in federal grants to state and local government last year? (4) What are Stinger missiles? Did the Saudis get any from the U.S.? (5) Who heads the African National Congress?

Charlotte's ebb

North Carolina SANE tried to jump on Charlotte city buses with its paid advertising—but got told to buzz off. The anti-arms race group wanted to call attention to the U.S. government practice of spending \$435 for a \$17 hammer while cutting school lunch programs, and to say that an educated mind and a full stomach are as important to national security as guns. The ad shows a child sucking his thumb, with the caption: "Do you think this child is worth the price of a \$17 hammer?" The city of Charlotte has a 10-year-old policy that allows ads for goods and services, not concepts. Yet ads for handgun control and church revivals have been accepted. SANE contends that its rights to free speech and equal protection under the law are being violated. The group is suing the city, although an out-of-court settlement for damages arising from loss of membership dues and contributions is expected any day.

Receipt deceit

Las Vegas is a city of scams, but surely this takes the cake for greed and jingoism rolled into one. A display ad in the entertainment magazine *What's On in Las Vegas* offers taxi receipts to visitors who don't think they've collected enough of their own. "Let us help you fill in those black spaces in your expense accounts!" the ad exhorts. The Taxi/Limo Receipt Service provides five "actual" receipts for \$1, and 12 for \$2. Rest assured this is for a good cause: "All proceeds go to aid the *contras*." What more appropriate way to raise money for the "moral equivalent" of our founding fathers?

No pun intended

A hot anti-*contra*, pro-peace initiative has gotten on the November ballot in California's Contra Costa County. It calls upon the federal government to stop sending military aid to Central America and, specifically, to stop sending it through Contra Costa County, home of the Concord Naval Weapons Station. A group called Peace in Central America, based in Walnut Creek, gathered more than 33,000 voter signatures and presented them with a flourish last month to the county elections department, which verified and accepted them. Now the voters can decide. Petition coordinator Chuck Goodmacher says the point is "to use American ballots to stop American bullets from being sent to repressive governments and *contra* terrorists."

Regrouping in Berkeley

Berkeley Citizens Action (BCA), the left coalition that suffered a *de facto* recall of its city council majority in June, pulled together to choose a mayoral candidate in July. BCA's nominating convention picked Loni Hancock, a former city council member still active in city and state politics, to run for the seat of retiring Mayor Gus Newport. BCA also voted to seek the repeal of the measure that broke its 8-1 council majority by forcing incumbents to stand for elections this fall in newly created districts. (See *In These Times*, June 25.)

Principled profit II

Last month we noted the success of burgeoning social investment funds. Now, in response to inquiries from our readers, we proffer the addresses of six such funds.

Calvert Social Investment Fund
1700 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20006
(800) 368-2748 (301) 951-4820

The Dreyfus Third Century Fund, Inc.
600 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022
(800) 645-6561 (718) 895-1206

New Alternatives Fund, Inc.
295 Northern Boulevard
Great Neck, NY 11021
(516) 466-0808

Pix World Fund, Inc.
224 State Street
Portsmouth, NH 03801
(603) 431-8022

South Shore Bank Money Market Accounts
7054 South Jeffrey Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60649
(312) 288-1000

Working Assets Money Fund
230 California Street
San Francisco, CA 94111
(800) 543-8800 (415) 989-3200

(See page 22)

Packaging scam leads to La Dolce Velveeta

A new type of ripoff is running rampant in your local supermarket. Masterminded by some of the country's biggest food conglomerates, it is known technically as "packaging appearance deception."

Some coffee roasters, such as Folger and Maxwell House, have been putting only 12 or 13 ounces in the standard 16-ounce can. There is nothing to indicate that you are getting fewer ounces except a very small line (usually in hard-to-read, noncontrasting type) on the bottom of the can. When you open the can, is it less than full? Absolutely not, because the coffee has been "puffed up" by flaking the ground beans. The writing on the can maintains that the coffee has been processed to unlock more flavor during brewing. The fact remains that you are still getting fewer ounces.

Similar deceptive packaging is being used in potato chips and other snack foods packed in plastic bags. The usual pound-size bags now hold only 14 ounces, the "half-pounders" only seven.

Major dairy product firms like Kraft and Borden lead in deceiving the public about adulterated cheeses. For dec-

ades, the typical "American" cheese in sliced form has consisted of reprocessed cheddar. It was 100 percent cheese with the minimum of spoilage retardant chemicals added. Cheese processors found, however, that Americans would buy a slightly adulterated cheese of that type if it were similarly—and deceptively—packaged in flat squares. So out came "American Slices." The package looks the same, but in small letters it says "Processed Cheese Food." Government regulators insist on this line. After all, it isn't cheese anymore. It's cheese food.

The success of "cheese food" led to an even more adulterated cheddar that, by government permission, has been designated "cheese food product." It is identified on the package in extremely small letters. This "cheese food product" contains as little as 50 percent cheese. Yet it and the other adulterated cheeses sell for almost the same price as real cheese. The savings reaped by the producers through the substitution of cheap fillers such as cottonseed oil are not passed along to the consumer.

The ultimate deception

came in early 1985 when Kraft and Borden began to produce a completely synthetic "cheese" packaged in the same square plastic packages as real cheddar and sold under private labels. It is widely sold in big-city ghetto areas where a large number of illiterate people buy it thinking they are getting "American" cheese slices.

Control over deceptively advertised and packaged food is a job Congress gave to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). But the agency has done little to curb this multi-million-dollar ripoff. Bruce Silverglade, legal director of the Center for Science in the Public Interest, a nonprofit consumer organization in Washington, D.C., says complaints have fallen on deaf ears at the FTC. He charges that the agency has left the job of policing food industry advertising to courageous yet ill-matched state officials and self-regulatory groups such as trade associations.

Because the FTC is the only agency that can permanently halt deceptive practices yet refuses to do so, there's seemingly no one left to check out fraud at the supermarket.

—John L. Kent

Lesbian fights to defend rights and country

The military powers that be picked the wrong person last November when they told 2d Lt. Ellen Nesbitt of the New York Air National Guard that her homosexuality was incompatible with military service. Nesbitt, 34, of Long Island, and the nonprofit GI rights advocacy group Citizen Soldier have launched a vigorous campaign to strike down the regulation that says lesbians and gay men not only "adversely affect the ability of the Air National Guard to maintain discipline, good order and morale," but also are subject to blackmail and undercut the respectability of military uniform.

Next month Nesbitt will argue—in an administrative hearing if the Air Force grants her one and in writing if it doesn't—that her sexual orientation in no way "interferes with mission accomplishment." She has an eight-year record heaped with praise to back her up. The Air Force, of course, will point to the regulation, a version of which is applied throughout the armed forces. If her involuntary discharge is finalized, she will take her case to the federal courts, where Nesbitt feels she may win. If she does, the Supreme Court will certainly grant the military an appeal. To date, cases like hers have never reached the high court.

Each year an estimated 2,000 service members are discharged—sometimes honorably, sometimes not—from the armed forces due to their sexual preference. Most don't challenge the dismissal; those



2d Lt. Ellen Nesbitt

who have tried rarely succeeded. Since going public Nesbitt has received letters and phone calls from many who say, "If you win, I'd go back [to the military] in a second." The prospect of hordes of skilled, patriotic lesbians and gay men reinstated in the armed forces may make the New Right shudder, but Nesbitt has a rebuttal even they should understand. "Look at how much money the government would save," she says, alluding to money spent training guard members who are later dismissed.

Nesbitt and Citizen Soldier are trying to draw Gov. Mario Cuomo into the case in view of his enlightened executive order stating that New York policy forbids discrimination based on sexual preference. His office's response to their queries? Apparently federal homophobia pre-empts state civil rights policy, and Nesbitt is a federal, not state, employee. Yet in April Cuomo exerted

state control over New York Guard troops by forbidding them to train in Honduras. Surely he can't have it both ways.

Nesbitt is inspired by the support she's received from the East End Gay Organization, the Gay Veterans Association, her co-workers at the Nassau County Department of Social Services as well as her Guard unit. "They can't throw you out for that!" said the guys in the Guard shop where Nesbitt worked as a mechanic when she enlisted. "Why didn't you just tell them it's none of their goddamn business?"

That's her goal—to keep the question about sexual preference from being asked. In the meantime, Nesbitt says, they can't dent her dignity. "I took the dive," she wants to tell those in the gay community who fear fighting for their rights, "and the water's not as cold as it looks."

—Robin Epstein

MILITARY BUILDUP

The latest weapon in a deadly arsenal

By Carolyn van Schaik

WASHINGTON, DC

WITH LITTLE FANFARE OR protest, Congress may soon approve initial production of an extremely costly new strategic missile that is, in many ways, as dangerous to world security as the MX missile or the Strategic Defense Initiative, otherwise known as Star Wars.

For nearly five years, the slumbering giant that is President Reagan's ultimate strategic weapon against the Soviet Union has lurked in the shadowy sidelines of research and advance procurement. On Au-

gust 6 Congress was scheduled to vote on whether to start production of the lethal D-5, also known as Trident II. Trident submarines already carry a missile known as the C-4 that could easily lay waste to most Soviet cities in case of massive retaliation. But the D-5 is far more powerful and accurate. It could knock out such hardened targets as missile launch sites and command centers.

Thus, it has the potential for being used as a first-strike, preemptive weapon that can be located in the oceans only 15 minutes or so from Soviet targets. Like any first-strike weapon, it tightens the hair-trigger of nuclear war, possibly by encouraging the Soviets to move toward a system of launch-

ing their weapons on warning, not on clear attack, to insure that their nuclear arsenal is not wiped out.

The cost of D-5

The administration is asking Congress to authorize \$1.4 billion this year to start production on the first 21 of a proposed 818 missiles. Ultimately, the D-5 missiles will cost at least \$40 billion, more than half of the \$75 billion projected for the Trident program, which includes submarines, bases and missiles, but not the warheads or the cost of retrofitting older Poseidon submarines with C-4 missiles. Each warhead is equivalent to 475 kilotons of dynamite (the Hiroshima bomb was 12.5 kilotons), and each of the planned 20 submarines will carry nearly 200 such warheads.

But the D-5 is a destabilizing threat primarily because of its potency against hard, or defended, targets such as missile silos. A single volley of all 818 D-5 missiles has the explosive power and accuracy to destroy up to 96 percent of all Soviet land-based missiles, reaching them in 15 minutes or less from roughly one-third of the world's oceans. By contrast, the C-4 has an explosive yield of 100 kilotons and is far less accurate; a volley of C-4s would destroy less than 9 percent of Soviet silos.

Why has such a lethal missile proceeded this far with so little protest inside or outside Congress? The victory against the MX provides one clue. It was defeated because of its basing mode, not because of its dangerous first-strike capabilities so similar to those of the D-5. Much of the opposition came from those who didn't want the MX in their back yard. But the Trident is in nobody's back yard.

A second clue is that the submarine leg of the U.S. strategic triad—along with missiles and bombers—has always been politically the most popular, even with liberals.

Another clue is that the Trident program is not sold as a first-strike weapon, but rather as a "counterforce" weapon that lulls some into thinking it is simply part of traditionally retaliatory defense. Typically, Trident programs have been itemized only in fragments throughout the budget, concealing their cost and character—although Congress' recent decision to cancel Trident submarine number 14 under budget pressures shows the program is not invulnerable.

The last clue is that many liberals in Congress fear being labeled as "soft on defense." They want to be able to vote for some weapons system. So although they agreed to cap the MX last year, they also approved further research and development of the D-5. Even leaders of the House arms control bloc, such as Rep. Pat Schroeder (D-CO), voted for the D-5 while simultane-

ously maintaining that they opposed U.S. acquisition of a first-strike capability.

D-5 opponents often find their arguments work against the cause. The distinctly unsettling features of the Trident D-5 program—its accuracy, lethality and sheer size—are the very reasons some Congress members favor the D-5.

Stop the D-5

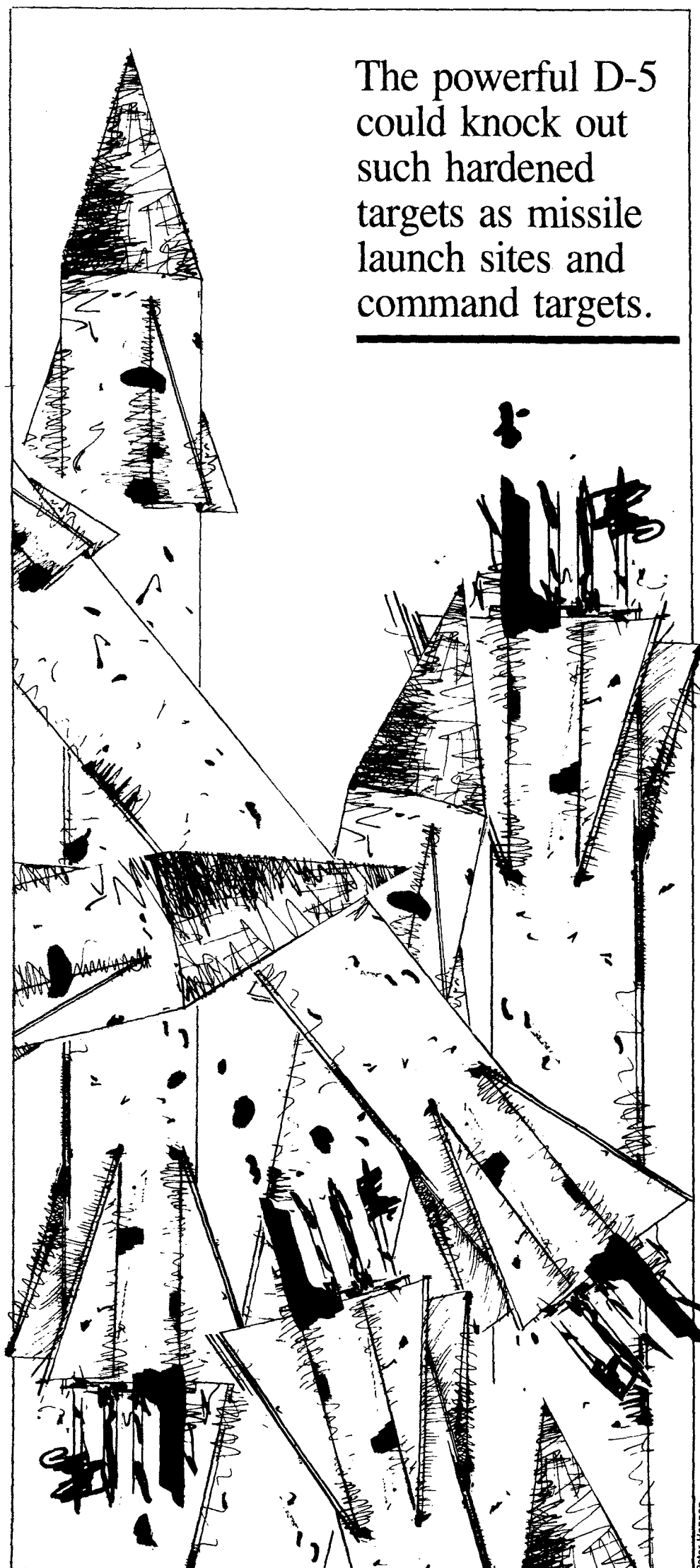
During the past two years Rep. Ted Weiss (D-NY) has offered amendments deleting D-5 funds, but last year it won only 79 votes, a decline from 1984. This year Weiss hopes that a further amendment to transfer D-5 production funds to restarting production of the smaller C-4, which ended last year, will receive more support.

Although the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy is the only national organization to focus on defeating the D-5, other groups, such as the Union of Concerned Scientists, have joined in publicity against it or any submarine-launched ballistic missiles that can be used to destroy hardened targets.

Also, budget pressures have led some Congress members to propose cutting back the D-5. Discussions of such cuts, particularly by Rep. Les Aspin of the House Armed Services Committee, may not be very serious so far. But \$40 billion for a dangerous weapons system designed for initiating nuclear war cannot be kept from serious scrutiny forever, especially in an era of budget squeezes.

Carolyn van Schaik is a journalist who works with the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy.

The powerful D-5 could knock out such hardened targets as missile launch sites and command targets.



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CONTRAS

'Humanitarian' aid is all in the family

By Beth Sims

FRIENDS OF THE AMERICAS IS A mom-and-pop relief organization with an *amigo* in the White House and an elastic definition of refugees. The *amigo* is Ronald Reagan, and, not surprisingly, much of the relief goes to his favorite band of Nicaraguan "refugees," the *contras*. While Friends of the Americas (FOA) operates throughout Central America, it is most active in southern Honduras, right in the heart of *contra* country.

Mom and pop are Diane and Louis "Woody" Jenkins of Baton Rouge, La. But this is no plain-label husband and wife team. Diane's resume includes a stint as Louisiana's assistant attorney general and another as assistant district attorney in Baton Rouge. She gave up her law practice to become FOA's executive director, a move hailed by Reagan at a \$250-a-plate dinner sponsored by the Nicaraguan Refugee Fund. Diane stole the honors that spring night in 1985: a 24-inch bronze statue of the president, dubbed the first annual Ronald Reagan Humanitarian Award.

Husband Woody, group founder and chairman, is a Louisiana state representative and a Reagan appointee to the U.S. delegation that monitored last year's Honduran presidential election. Jenkins sports a global reach unusual for a state representative. At an international conference in Paris last November, he lectured participants on "Freedom vs. Marxism in Central



Carmen Winkler, director of FOA in Honduras, holds a "Shoe Box for Liberty."

America." Stressing Central America's strategic importance to Europe, he urged the group to sever economic ties to Nicaragua and support U.S. policy in Central America.

All-purpose definition

The Jenkins' Friends of the Americas is one piece of a jigsaw puzzle of the private groups that buttress Reagan's counter-revolutionary policies in Central America. The organizations provide services ranging from military advisers to material aid to medical care in civic action clinics. Some, like FOA, target refugee communities in a two-pronged drive to boost Uncle Sam's public image and pacification programs.

United by interlocking directorates and a knee-jerk anti-Communism, about a dozen of the most active groups have raked in \$20-25 million for the *contras* since 1984. Woody Jenkins says he is "all for the freedom fighters" and wants "the Sandinistas kicked out of Nicaragua," but he maintains that the group serves only refugees and is not involved with combatants. According to a recent Friends newsletter, one of the criteria for 1986 projects was that the aid not go to governments or paramilitary groups.

Yet Carmen Winkler, FOA's administrator in Tegucigalpa, gave a slippery definition of the people served by FOA. "We don't help freedom fighters—only refugees," she said. But she also noted, "All the people that are there [in FOA service areas] are the families of the freedom fighters."

Other definitions are just as pliable. Mario Calero, a member of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN) and brother of the *contras'* commander-in-chief, said, "Some of the refugees are freedom fighters. I consider myself a refugee."

Such supple interpretations of "refugee" prove invaluable to FOA. At a minimum, FOA's humanitarian aid to Miskito refugees has given the *contras* a base of operations, logistical connections and the run-off from its steady flow of aid. One of the group's most successful projects, for instance, has been the Shoeboxes for Liberty campaign. More than 50,000 small boxes packed with personal supplies have been distributed to Nicaraguan refugees since 1984. In the beginning, FOA used to stick a note on the boxes that made their loyalties clear: "We hope the small things in this box are useful in your struggle for freedom."

Handholding with the *contras*

Bunched along the border in southern Honduras are 17 major Friends of the Americas facilities including landing strips, hospitals and clinics, nutrition centers and schools. Just outside these refugee centers—whose inhabitants are usually *contra* families—are

the rebel camps. Even when the goods do not go directly into *contra* pockets from the CIA-created airline that delivers them, the aid at least indirectly serves the rebels. MISURA leader Steadman Fagoth said in 1984 that FOA assistance let his men "concentrate on the war" instead of worrying about their families' welfare.

The very location of FOA's projects is a boon to the *contras*. The centers, which in FOA's words are often "within feet of the border," offer a smokescreen for rebel comings and goings and provide a recruitment pool for new members. Sources say that *contras* harass and intimidate refugees, blocking those who wish to repatriate to Nicaragua and forcing others to join their ranks.

An October 1985 *Sojourner* report quoted relief workers and a North American missionary who pointed out a link between relief groups and *contra* recruitment methods. They said that Friends of the Americas and Christian Emergency Relief Teams personnel hand out watches, cameras, shoes and tape decks to MISURA members. The *contras* then pass these items on to Miskito refugees to entice them into joining MISURA.

FOA's relationship with the *contras* goes beyond such furtive handholding to outright patronage. Fagoth said his MISURA group, which works in tandem with the FDN, received two tons of food from Friends of the Americas in one month in 1984. Last December an official with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Honduras said MISURA uses FOA's radios and planes. In Tegucigalpa, their supplies are stored in a former FDN safehouse, and their liaison with the Honduran army doubles as the army's liaison with the *contras*. Rebel jeeps are used to deliver FOA materials, and armed *contras* have been spotted unloading FOA supplies. The partnership goes right in the back door and onto the payroll. According to former relief officials

Friends of the Americas hides under humanitarian camouflage while it slips food, clothing, medicines and logistical aid to combatants.

and a missionary in Honduras, two FOA employees are MISURA members.

This buddy system is backed by the generosity of the U.S. government. The Denton Amendment allows humanitarian aid to travel free of charge on military transport if space is available. Even before its passage, FOA goods were carried to Honduras by Air National Guard units in Mississippi and Louisiana. In March 100,000 pounds of supplies were airlifted from Kelly Air Force Base in Texas to Tegucigalpa. Worth \$400,000, it was the largest single shipment in FOA's history.

The group's operations have been assisted by other government agencies as well. FOA flies the clandestine skies of the CIA from Tegucigalpa to its border establishments on SETCO. Reportedly created by the CIA to ferry *contras* and their supplies, SETCO also makes deliveries to FOA centers.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) has become an expert at laundering donations to FOA through third parties. Medical supplies paid for by AID are passed through the Honduran Ministry of Health to the group's operations. PL-480 food from AID's Food for Peace program comes to FOA through CARE, the popular relief organization, and Friends employees distribute tools and seeds in what is technically an AID project.

Deep pockets and deception

For such a young group, Friends of the Americas has been suspiciously vital. Founded only two years ago, it has sprouted centers every place in Central America where the U.S. government is promoting counterrevolution. In its first year alone, it raised \$1.3 million, a hefty performance for a new charity group.

Some of the money comes from grassroots appeals, but the grass seems to grow greener on FOA's side of the fence. A recent request for contributions asked for pledges of up to \$10,000 a month. FOA also draws on support from the affluent, right-wing Knights of Malta and Pat Robertson's evangelical organization, the Christian Broadcasting Network. Other supplies come from the Dooley Foundation, a group whose ties to the CIA go back to the '60s and Southeast Asia. Retired Gen. John K. Singlaub, chosen by the National Security Council to be chief "private" fundraiser for the *contras*, has also passed funds to FOA.

FOA's slick fundraising appeals are crammed with anti-Sandinista propaganda and heartbreaking stories about starving children. They are also spectacularly distorted. In an April 14 fundraising letter, FOA claimed to be the "only hope" for 60,000 Nicaraguan refugees in Honduras. Independent relief officials, however, put the total number of refugees closer to 20,000, most of whom are already served by the United Nations, World Relief and the Red Cross.

FOA also claims to be saving children from kwashiorkor, a fatal disease caused by malnutrition. But FOA's own doctor in Rus Rus said "nutrition is not a problem here," and an epidemiologist from the U.S. Center for Disease Control agrees. The physician, who visited FOA sites in 1984, tested children for malnutrition and "found nothing that would indicate an emergency situation" compared to other Central American locations. "The health situation," he observed, "is probably typical of any isolated area" in a developing country. He discouraged further large-scale food distribution and said abdominal swelling was due to parasites, not kwashiorkor, a disease that he said was "virtually unknown" in the region.

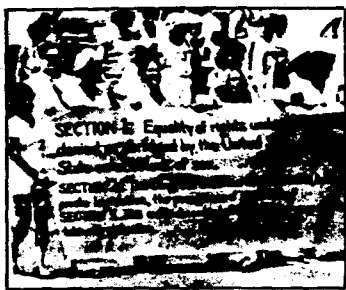
Friends of the Americas hides behind a humanitarian camouflage while it slips food, clothing, medicines and logistical aid to combatants. Contrary to its charitable claims, it is helping to prolong a war that breeds refugees and brutality. As long as FOA's partners are the U.S. government and its rebel proxies, it will be hard to conclude that Friends of the Americas are not just friends of the *contras* in disguise. ■

Beth Sims is co-author of *The New Right Humanitarians*, published by the Inter-Hemispheric Education Resource Center of Albuquerque, N.M.

BLACKLISTED NEWS

No other book to date conveys the atmosphere—the people, places and events—which turned those dreams and schemes of the 1960's into the unbelievable realities of the 1980's.

The immediate post-war era was an exciting time to be alive. The CIA waged secret wars in Jamaica. In South Africa, mass riots drew the attention of the world. Washington rocked with demonstrations, protests and smoke-ins. The women's movement gained full momentum. Long hair turned into spiked hair. Native Americans had the Black Hills blown wide open, while anti-nuclear protesters hoped Diablo Canyon wouldn't be.



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By William Gasperini

ESTELI, NICARAGUA

WITH SUCH DEFIANT CHANTS as, "We are three million defeating your \$100 million!" Nicaraguans marked the seventh anniversary of the Sandinista revolution July 19 amid an increasingly polarized atmosphere. Sending a strong message to the U.S., "the northern heroic city" of Esteli hosted the annual celebration, as 25,000 rallied outside the town, which is 150 kilometers north of Managua. The Sandinistas sought to show recent events have not dampened the strong spirit that has so far proved critical in responding to intensified U.S. pressures.

Despite the city's festive air, the rally could not dispel the sense of forboding that has hovered over Nicaragua since the U.S. House of Representatives approved new *contra* aid on June 25. Thus the crowd's response to President Daniel Ortega's speech was subdued, as Nicaraguans continue to realize that there is little light at the end of a long, dark tunnel.

During the rally, Ortega read off a litany of numbing statistics, which deepened the ominous mood. "We would rather dedicate this gathering to talking of production, education, health," he said as the crowd listened impassively. "But instead we are holding it in the midst of an aggression that only threatens to increase. This war has already claimed 31,290 victims among those in defense, those who suffer its effects [civilians], and then those used as mercenary forces to assassinate their own people." Breaking down civilian deaths only, he listed 420 *campesinos*, 293 students, 194 workers, 124 professionals, 103 teachers, 40 drivers, 33 community leaders, five doctors and three nurses.

Determination

Nestled in the rolling hills of Las Segovias province, Esteli has played a vital role in Nicaraguan history. Much of Augusto Sandino's fight in the '20s against the occupying U.S. Marines took place in this region, and Esteli suffered the most damage of any urban area during the 1978-79 insurrection. On three separate occasions residents rose up spontaneously against dictator Anastasio Somoza. The townspeople's determined spirit so enraged Somoza that he swore he would leave Nicaragua if the town ever fell; Sandinista combatants took Esteli July 16, 1979, and Somoza fled to Miami before dawn on July 17.

Ever since, this strong pro-Sandinista image has made Esteli a *contra* target, including a concerted offensive one year ago when the rebels penetrated to the outskirts of the town before being overwhelmed in a government counteroffensive.

Since the *contra* aid vote, the now legendary combative spirit of most "Estelinos" has again risen, setting an example for the rest of the country.

"They thought we would be afraid to celebrate the *triumfo* here," said resident Alejandra Picardo. "But more than anything, we are demonstrating repudiation for the \$100 million. Not with \$100 or with \$100 billion will they destroy this revolution."

In many ways Picardo's family is typical of those of Esteli. Her simple wooden home served as a safe house for Sandinista guerrillas during the revolution, and she is active in the Nicaraguan women's movement. All six of her sons have fought either against Somoza's National Guard or the *contras*.

Her oldest son Oscar died in combat in 1979, and 23-year-old Pedro has been wounded three times. On June 4 he almost died in hand-to-hand combat as his elite unit attacked a *contra* base camp in the mountains.

While thousands like Pedro battle the *contras* directly, others strive to handle Nicaragua's critical economic situation. At this stage the economic war appears as critical as the military, with the U.S.-*contra* strategy aimed at "bleeding the country to death" and building opposition.

Opposition leaders counter by blaming the Sandinistas for most of the country's

NICARAGUA

Little light at the end of a dark tunnel

economic ills. Shopkeepers complain about difficulties securing imported raw materials and criticize middle-level officials for incompetent administration.

"We constantly hear about shortages, but then see raw materials such as cement stored in government warehouses," said Esteli merchant Emilio Cornejo. "Most people still wait with high expectations, but things just get more politicized and rhetorical."

Yet while complaints run rampant about inefficiencies that even the government acknowledges, most Nicaraguans seem willing to tolerate such hardships as long lines and food shortages. In a sense they adhere to the experimental nature of the Nicaraguan revolution.

But as the pressures increase, the contrasts sharpen between the countryside and Managua, which with a population of 900,000 houses about a third of the total population. Because the city is relatively far from the war zone, the Sandinistas have

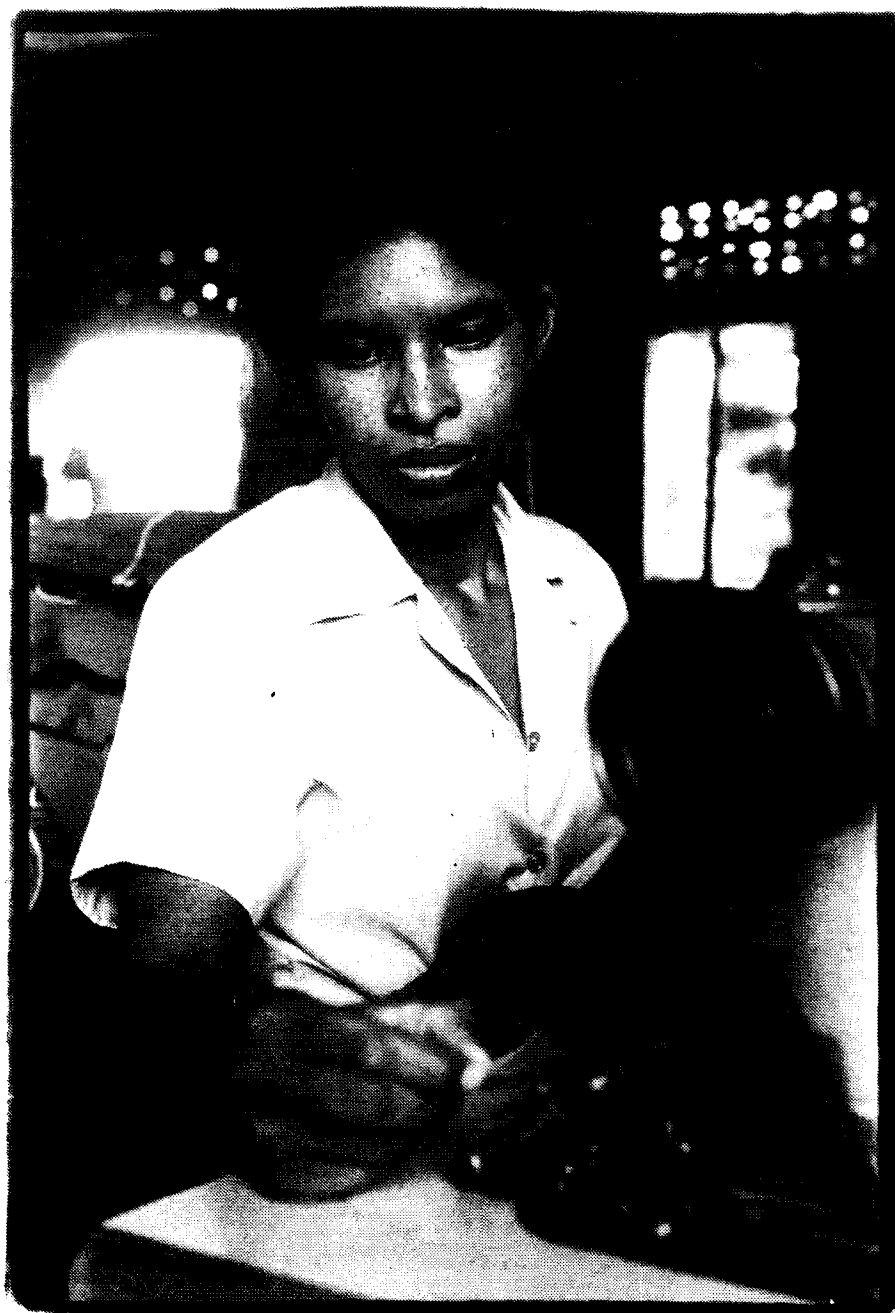
lost ground there. In part this has been deliberate; a top Sandinista priority remains reversing the flow of resources that traditionally have poured into Managua.

Spreading it around

"Our capital has always been like a huge parasite on the country, gobbling up much of what we produce," Ortega said recently when talking with disgruntled residents of a Managua *barrio*. "If we could pour all of our resources into this neighborhood, we would. But it is about time those in the countryside got some attention."

This policy also aims to dissuade new migration into Managua, which has doubled in size since 1979 as people flee war areas and seek economic gain. Many end up working as street vendors, and, with inflation rapidly taking salaries, such tertiary activity becomes more attractive. But it also inevitably hampers production of vital food crops.

Since the contra aid vote, the combative spirit of residents of Esteli has risen again.



Steve Cagan

Even among vocal critics, almost no one sees the *contras* as an alternative to the Sandinistas, no matter how neatly the Reagan administration packages them.

Attempting to keep people in the *campo*, the government has undertaken efforts to support agriculture, offering easier access to credit, farm tools and equipment. These policies have appeased complaints and have generally made foodstuffs more available outside of Managua.

Even among vocal critics, almost no one sees the *contras* as an alternative to the Sandinistas, no matter how neatly the Reagan administration packages them. The one time rebels attacked a major town hoping to rally people to their side failed miserably; during the August 1985 attack on La Trinidad, a town with a reputation for opposition prior to the incident, most people hid in their homes in terror. Eight townspeople and an unknown number of *contras* died during the attack.

In many rural areas people refer to the *contras* directly as *la guardia*, or those from Somoza's National Guard. Recalling the terrors of that era, they may be critical of the Sandinistas but stick with the revolution in spite of increasing difficulties—most of which they recognize as stemming from the war.

The sharpest battle for hearts and minds inevitably occurs in the critical war zones. The Sandinistas' strategy of placing priority on outlying regions has provoked a predictable *contra* response; they are easily able to exacerbate government difficulties in transportation of food and supplies.

Increasingly, the *contras* are placing anti-tank land mines on remote roads in northern areas. The most recent example was an explosion in early July on the narrow dirt road leading to San Jose de Bocay, 180 miles northeast of Managua. Thirty-four civilians died when the truck they were riding in hit a mine buried by *contras* in a puddle. Among the dead were 12 children, 12 women, eight men and two bodies so dismembered that identification was impossible (see *ITT*, "Ashes and Diamonds," July 23).

Since early May, 35 other civilians have died in at least five similar blasts, including an explosion on the same road on May 24 that killed a popular Spanish health worker and eight others.

"Lacking sufficient power to engage our forces directly, they have turned to this out of frustration," said local military commander Luis Talavera. "They seek to destroy military vehicles, but at the same time isolate the town by terrorizing the population."

Apart from attacking productive activity, local leaders say the *contras* have also taken advantage of what Sandinista official Louis Fischer called mistakes made in the revolution's early years, such as emphasizing state-administered farms, which over time proved inefficient.

"We are now on a counteroffensive against the *contras* politically as well as militarily," Fischer said. "We have worked steadily to regain confidence among the population here." He cited a growing number of privately-run peasant cooperatives as an example, part of continuing land reform throughout the country.

Bocay residents praised what they term gains of the revolution, including easier access to farm credit, a new health post and improved schools. While some disgruntled townspeople had supported the *contras* at one time, the situation changed definitively with the May 24 *contra* mine explosion that killed Spanish health worker Ambrosio Mogorron, who had lived in the town since 1980.

"Any support the *contras* still had in Bocay vanished that night," said Senia Lopez, a nurse who worked with the 33-year-old Spaniard. "In his simple manner, Ambrosio had won the confidence of everyone in the area. People could not believe that he was dead."

One senior diplomat in Managua called the mining "part of classic insurgency doctrine" aimed at paralyzing food distribution. "In theory, when you undermine belief that the government is in charge, you create conditions for a broad-based insurgency," he said. "But in this situation it does not seem to be the way to get people behind you."

William Gasperini is In These Times' correspondent in Nicaragua.

SOVIET UNION

Is Soviet manifesto a sign of rebellion?

By David Moberg

HAS THE SPIRIT OF SOLIDARITY found its way into the upper ranks of Soviet officialdom? On July 22 the *Guardian* of London published a harsh critique of Soviet society that also called for a free press, an end to political persecution, a multi-party system and economic reforms, ranging from more autonomy for enterprises to permitting private business.

Martin Walker, the *Guardian's* experienced and highly respected Moscow correspondent, wrote that the 17-page document from a self-proclaimed "Movement for Socialist Renewal" "comes from senior official sources in Moscow." He argued that "from internal evidence, it was written by a group of powerful officials with unusual access to Western sources and to privileged Soviet statistics."

But other Soviet experts doubt that any top-level officials wrote the manifesto, even though leading democratic-socialist dissidents like Roy Medvedev have long argued that there is a significant group of leading party and government officials who favor radical democratic reforms. There are, however, almost as many theories about who did write the document and why as there are theoreticians.

The document paints a grim picture of a faltering economy, technological backwardness, low morale, rampant alcoholism, military vulnerability, debilitating waste of resources, abysmal living standards and

heavy external debt. As a consequence, it argues, Soviet political leadership in the world has collapsed. Inside the Soviet Union, "the crisis of the economic system is closely connected to the political crisis, which concerns such fundamental constitutional principles of the socialist state as the freedom of speech, press and assembly, of personal immunity, private correspondence and telephone calls and the freedom to join organizations," the manifesto argues. "The ever-deepening political crisis affects the socialist state, not merely separate aspects of its activity."

Although the document portrays the West in unrealistically rosy terms, its criticisms are framed in terms of achieving true socialism. Lenin is cited abundantly, including admonitions that the socialist state has no reason to fear limited private trade and capitalist relations in its midst.

Free speech, press and political organization are defended as necessary to root out corruption (*a la* Watergate); to fight bureaucracy; to raise public morale; and to create, through competition, the best possible program for implementing socialism. The manifesto's economic reforms include observing "objectively existing economic laws" (apparently a veiled call for increased reliance on the market), decentralized planning and greater independence of enterprises, renting farm machines and land to individuals who would repay the state with a portion of their crops, stopping obstruction of private holdings on collective farms and permitting development of small-scale

private trade.

"I find the document interesting but not all that new," said Louis Menashe, professor of Russian history at Polytechnic University. "It reflects a long extant current in dissident circles and sections of the party and academic establishment. Everybody knows these things. [Prime Minister Michail] Gorbachov knows these things."

More than a decade ago Roy Medvedev argued for many of the same reforms in his book titled *On Socialist Democracy*, which was published only in the West. Not long ago an internal document by establishment economist Tatiana Zaslavskaya argued much the same case about the Soviet economy and was leaked to the West.

Indeed, Gerald Hough, a Soviet expert at Duke University and Brookings Institution, argues that academics and top officials can—and do—write such critical remarks and address them to the Politburo. But one of the internal discrepancies that makes Hough doubt that the manifesto came from top officials is its announcement of an organization. Writing criticism may be bad for one's career, he observed, but forming an unregistered organization is a serious crime—a risk that even few dissidents take and certainly not high officials.

Zhores Medvedev, a biological and nuclear researcher who often collaborates with his brother, Roy, and now lives in London, was even more convinced the document is a "fake." After reading the full Russian-language text, he concluded that it was full of "errors and strange language." The information was readily available, he argued, not accessible only to elites, as Walker believed. Medvedev said that it was suspiciously "pro-Western" for any group of even reform-minded officials. Also, he argued, there were many factual errors—understating Soviet GNP as compared to the U.S., reporting that gold sales far exceeded annual production, grossly exaggerating foreign debt and many more. In describing the increase in divorce, the document used decade-old figures when more recent statistics that are even more damning are readily

available. Medvedev argued on the basis of internal evidence that the manifesto probably originated with a German-based group of Soviet emigrés.

Other speculations abound about who might have authored the document. Walker suggested that it might have come from hard-liners who oppose Gorbachov's reforms, and hope, by associating him with such dissidence, to discredit him. The conservative *Washington Times* speculated that it might have been a KGB "disinformation" operation aimed at the West—portraying an economically and militarily weak USSR in order to persuade the U.S. to abandon its military buildup.

Soviet-American Review editor Alex Amerisov hypothesized that it was a KGB operation, but one with much different ends. He argued that the Soviet establishment has been terrified of internal upheaval since 1981 and the emergence of Solidarity in Poland, not only because it showed that

Theories abound about who really authored the new document.

discontent was widespread but also because the Communist Party collapsed so quickly.

With its agents in the field, the KGB understood the problem better than many others in the Soviet establishment and became the leading institutional backer of reforms by Uri Andropov and, later, Gorbachov, Amerisov argues. Thus, the KGB could have leaked the document to give the impression that democratic-socialist sentiment—which is otherwise being ruthlessly suppressed—is on the rise. This makes Gorbachov appear less of a left-wing reformer to the hard-line establishment, Amerisov argues. At the same time, it buttresses Gorbachov's argument that some reform is essential.

 <p>It's a cat eat dog world.</p> <p>purple on turquoise, fuschia or light tan</p>	 <p>Imagination is more important than knowledge</p> <p>ALBERT EINSTEIN</p> <p>white on black</p>	<p>T-SHIRTS \$6.95 EACH</p>  <p>SURE, I'M A MARXIST!</p> <p>black on red, on lt. blue or on tan</p>	 <p>IT'S 10pm. Do You Know Where Your Marines Are?</p> <p>black on red, tan on olive drab</p>	<p>IF I CAN'T DANCE...</p>  <p>I DON'T WANT TO BE PART OF YOUR REVOLUTION</p> <p>black on red or on lt. blue ivory on purple (50/50)</p>
<p>have a nice day!</p>  <p>yellow and pink on black or purple</p>	 <p>blue & green on white beefy-T</p>	<p>Join the Army</p>  <p>travel to exotic, distant lands; meet exciting, unusual people and kill them.</p> <p>white on blue</p>	<p>STOP</p> <p>South African REPRESSION</p>  <p>red & green on black</p>	<p>Because I'm the Mom THAT'S WHY</p> <p>ivory on fuschia or turquoise</p>
<p>ISRAEL-PALESTINE</p>  <p>SHARE THE LAND HARVEST THE PEACE</p> <p>blue on white</p>	 <p>ORGANIZE</p> <p>white on blue</p>	<p>NUTRITION QUIZ</p> <p>Which one is the vegetable?</p>  <p>a) b)</p> <p>brown on tan or on white</p>	 <p>That's all folks!</p> <p>white & gold on blue</p>	<p>NUKE A GAY WHALE FOR CHRIST</p>  <p>white on royal blue or on turquoise</p>
<p>NSM LOGO</p>  <p>white, yellow and black on turquoise (please indicate if you want our name on the back, at no extra charge)</p>	<p>NUCLEAR WAR? THERE GOES MY CAREER!</p>  <p>black on red or on fuschia</p>	<p>Behind Every Successful Woman is Herself</p> <p>black on red, on fuschia or on turquoise</p>	<p>LABOR CREATES ALL WEALTH</p>  <p>(National Lawyers Guild) black on light blue or red</p>	<p>T-SHIRTS \$6.95 EACH</p> <p>Sizes S/M/L/XL (all cotton unless noted) Add \$1 postage per order — Free Catalog —</p> <p>NORTHERN SUN MERCHANDISING</p> <p>Box ITT 2736 Lyndale Av. S. Mpls., MN 55408</p>

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

REVIEWING HIS FIRST FOUR months as prime minister, Jacques Chirac recently boasted that no other Fifth Republic government had accomplished so much so fast. His conservative government has been pushing through its Reagan-Thatcher-style program uninhibited by "cohabitation" with Socialist President Francois Mitterrand.

The Fifth Republic presidency created by de Gaulle is turning out not to be all-powerful. This realization may prelude a reform shortening the term of the presidency from seven to five years, making it coincide with the legislative term. What is remarkable is that "cohabitation," essentially a matter of form, is monopolizing French political attention to the exclusion of questions with real content.

"The French are anesthetized; they reject debate," lamented Sylvie Montrant in June when welcoming the fifth annual European Nuclear Disarmament convention to "the country that sabotaged the *Rainbow Warrior*." The seemingly inexhaustible fascination with cohabitation may be a sort of local anesthetic helping keep the French numb to the rest of a difficult world, with all its intractable problems.

Debate indeed seems to have subsided as the country sits back to watch the cohabitation match between Chirac and Mitterrand, with Mitterrand currently ahead on points in the polls.

The major political issue currently before the country—massive privatization of nationalized industries, banks and insurance companies—is being watched more to see how Chirac and Mitterrand will play it than on its own merits. Most people here lack conviction as to what the merits of the issue really are.

No wonder, since Mitterrand himself doesn't seem able to make up his mind. In March the Socialist president gave his authorization to Chirac to privatize by decree, a method allowed under the Fifth Republic to bypass time-consuming parliamentary debate. A month later, Mitterrand said he would not sign a final privatization decree concerning enterprises already nationalized before he came to office in 1981 or contrary to 1982 legislation "democratizing the public sector." But now he and everyone else has apparently forgotten those two stipulations.

On July 14, fresh from reviewing the troops at the annual Bastille Day parade down the Champs-Elysees, Mitterrand set off the summer's main political fireworks by rejecting Chirac's decree on purely patriotic grounds. As a matter of conscience, he could not, he said, sign decrees that would mean selling off the French patrimony below its real value or to foreign interests.

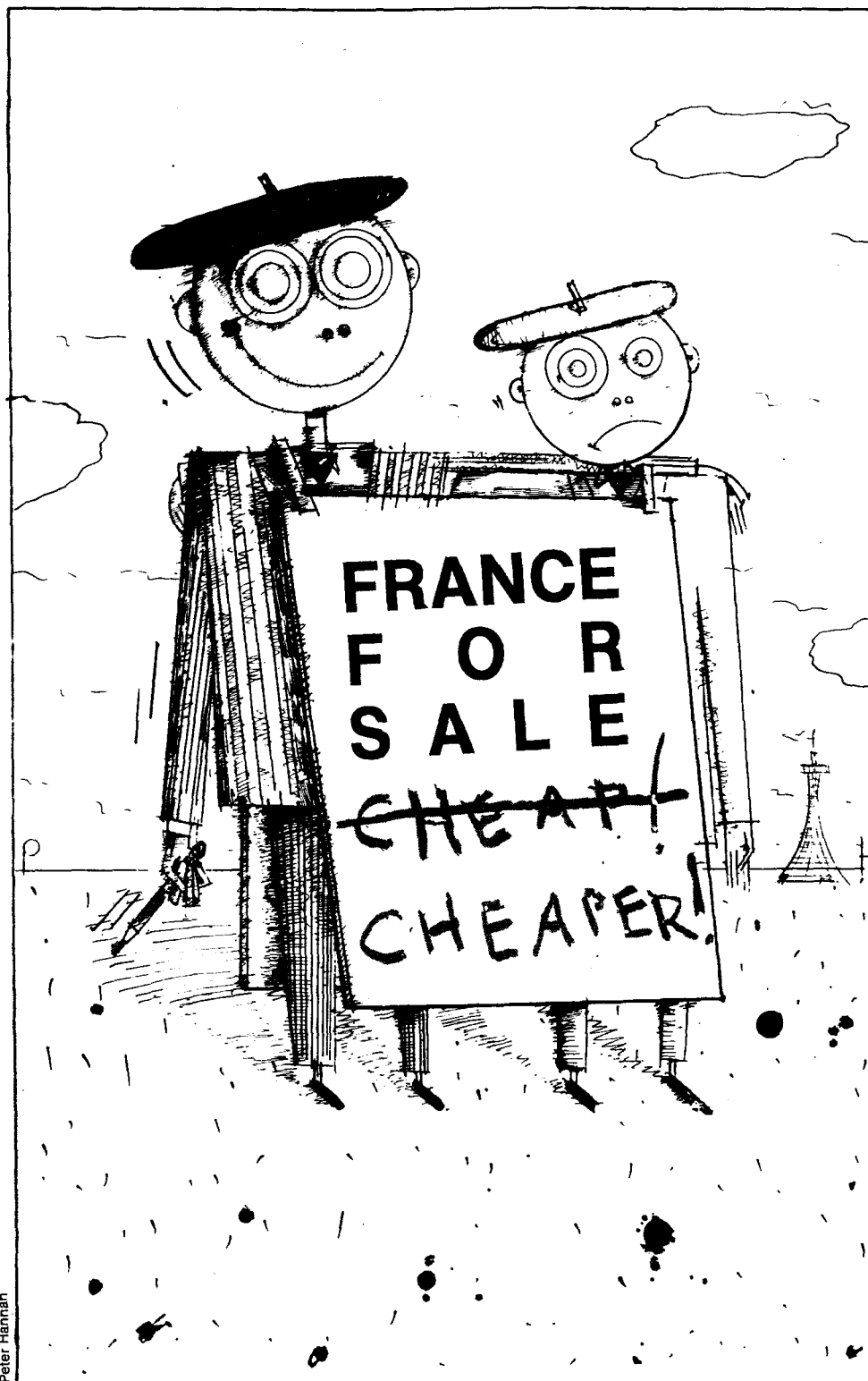
The catch

Yet there is not enough French private capital available to buy at their real value all the national assets Chirac is getting ready to sell. That is why even Chirac's main political rival on the right, former Prime Minister Raymond Barre, has warned that too much denationalization too fast would risk taking key sectors of the economy out of French control.

The heirs of de Gaulle hardly dare say that they are putting France up for sale. Gaullism, Chirac's political family, has always meant a strong state, in the French tradition, including government guidance in economic planning. Now Chirac is saying that state control is a thing of the past. He preaches "liberalism"—free market economics—with the zeal of the convert. To the public, it does seem that just as the left nationalized for ideological reasons and then didn't know quite what to do with the nationalized industries, the right is now privatizing for ideological reasons, promising marvels of prosperity and full employment, but with no clear idea how things will turn out.

Privatization is justified mainly by pointing to the supposed economic success of

FRANCE



State control is now a thing of the past

Reagan America, which has received extraordinarily flattering press in France. Nevertheless, doubts are growing. Privatization and deregulation measures are not overwhelmingly popular despite a barrage of media propaganda in their favor. Yet nobody cares much anymore about defending nationalizations, either.

The left's nationalizations were a deep disappointment to the "people of the left" who had hoped they would bring some of the qualitative changes suggested by the word "socialism." The result is an atmosphere of indifference and skepticism. Since nationalization did not change much of anything, even its former champions doubt that privatization will mean much. Cohabitation seems an additional guarantee that nothing drastic can happen, and is perhaps so popular precisely because of that reason.

Although the left's nationalizations failed to produce socialism or any other miracle, they did serve to pump billions of francs of investment capital into the six main nationalized groups (CGE, Rhone-Poulenc, Thomson, Saint-Gobain, Pechiney, Bull). The state takeover probably saved some of them. Pechiney's net losses in the year before nationalization ran to more than two billion francs, while after nationalization, in 1984, it showed net profits of 680 million francs. Rhone-Poulenc went from losses of 286 million francs in 1981 to more than two billion francs profit in 1984. Nationalization helped put these key industrial groups back on their feet—something the private French capital market was neither able nor willing to do.

Nationalization and privatization may not be quite as opposed as they seem. Both can be seen as serving a single central purpose: modernization. The need to modernize France is the obsessive consensus holding together the French political class. Both Socialists and Gaullists have run up against a relatively new but decisive obstacle to modernization by way of the state, which is the controlling power of that abstract and uncontrollable entity called the world financial market.

France as copycat

The preaching of liberalism is an effort to make a virtue of necessity. Since French political leaders are being forced by the movement of international capital to adopt

The Socialists are by no means opposing privatization tooth and nail.

Reaganomics, they would like to instill in the French population the appropriate mentality. What is needed is the American mystique, the desire to get rich by individual effort and the belief it is possible. This is why the media have been working so hard to make people admire telegenic businessman Bernard Tapie.

Chirac has promised that by year's end France will have a "different system of values." A "new landscape" is being created in France, he said.

These words are intended both to persuade his compatriots that a glorious new day is dawning and to reassure international capital that France is a safe place for investment. And he seems to be succeeding. As his top achievement Chirac recently pointed with pride to the "unprecedented massive entrance of capital" showing "the confidence of international opinion" in the new French government. Indeed, about \$10 billion has flowed into France in the last three months.

Some of that may be French money coming home from Texas now that the "socialo-communist" scare is over. But nobody is asking to see its passport. A lot of money is going to be needed to sell off a major chunk of the French economy, including 65 enterprises, at a price that does not defraud the state.

To meet Mitterrand's objections, Chirac's Finance Minister Edouard Balladur set a 15 percent limit on foreign capital allowed to buy into the privatized enterprises. But this financial Maginot Line cannot work. It applies only to holding companies, and only at first. It cannot be legally applied within the European Economic Community.

In fact, the right is preparing to sell French industry to foreign capital in the hope that mergers with foreign multinationals will hasten technological modernization and strengthen France's extremely weak export performance. This is a risky operation both economically and politically.

Economically, the hope is that dynamic Italian, German, British, American, even Japanese firms may bring their high-tech know-how and marketing skills along with their money, increasing French productivity and even creating jobs. But experience suggests, however, that something different could happen. Foreign investors could use their French branches to capture the French market with goods produced elsewhere. If Chirac deregulates France as he has promised in order to attract investment capital, it is hard to see how this could be prevented.

By playing up the patriotic aspect, Mitterrand is increasing the political risks. Socialist parliamentary leader Pierre Joxe struck the chord in a recent TV speech: "In the word 'nationalization' there is the word 'nation.'" Joxe warned that "denationalization is bad for the economy." Moreover, he said, some nationalized industries play a "vital strategic role" in national defense, and "the only way to avoid their takeover by foreigners is nationalization."

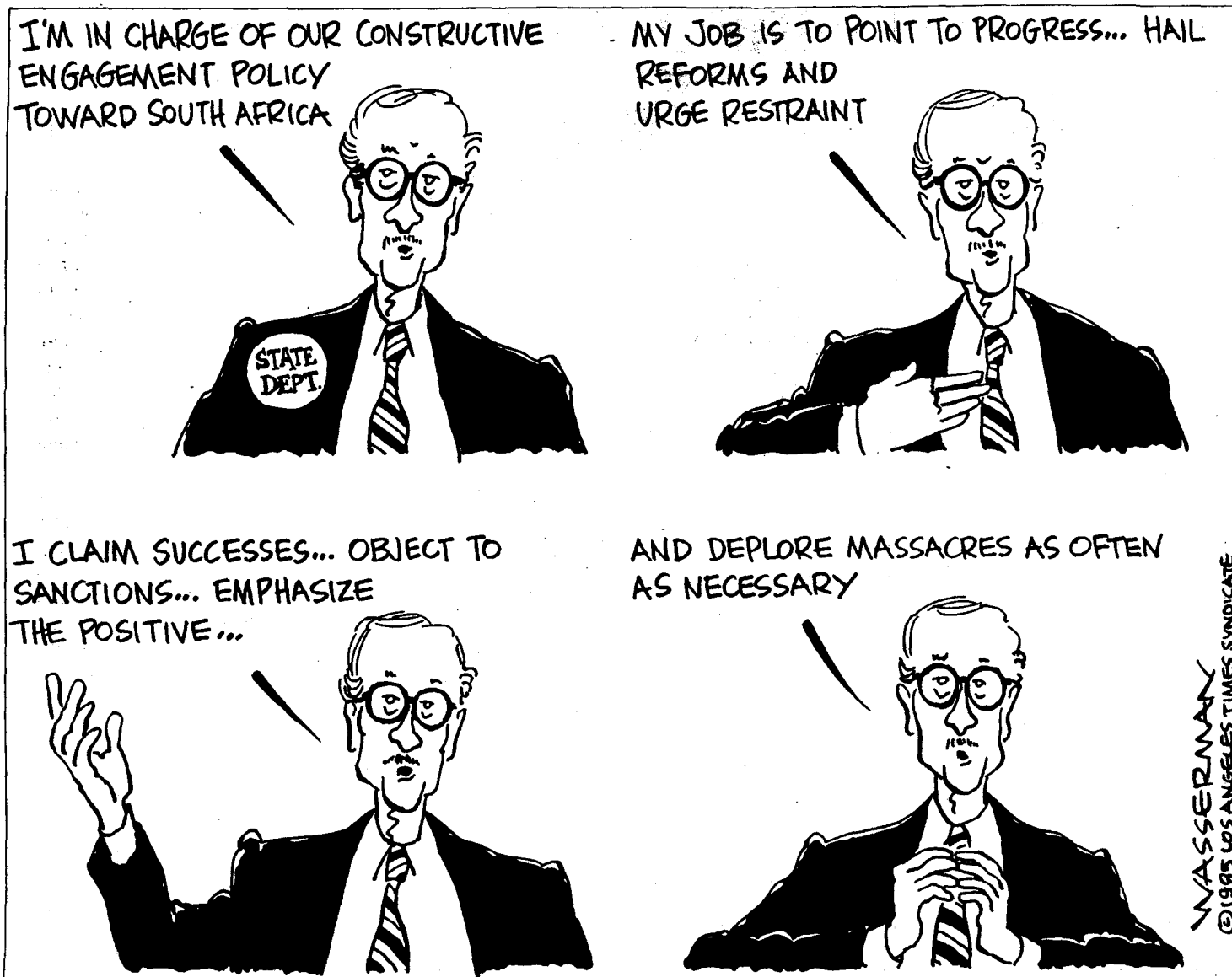
Yet the Socialists are by no means opposing privatization tooth and nail. Mitterrand's rejection of the decree process will slow the measures down, and as the bills go through parliament the Socialists will make speeches they can point to, saying "we told you so" when things go wrong.

The president could block privatization and take the issue to the country by calling elections. But he is not doing so because neither he nor the Socialist Party nor the country as a whole seems to care enough about the issue. Mitterrand might indeed be tempted to call early presidential and parliamentary elections in the near future since his personal popularity is at an all-time high—a reward, apparently, for doing next to nothing.

But the Socialist Party is in no shape to face elections. It is being splattered by financial scandal in the midst of an identity crisis. Alain Lipietz has called French Socialism "liberalism with a human face." It is looking for a way to be nicer than the right and win a majority of votes—like the American Democratic Party—in a political system revised along American lines to suit an American-style economy.

ZIMBABWE

Some sanctions suit the U.S.



By Steve Askin

HARARE, ZIMBABWE

WHO IS HE TO THINK ON our behalf?" asked Zimbabwe's top trade union leader the morning after President Reagan declared that "the primary victims of an economic boycott of South Africa would be the very people we seek to help" in South Africa and neighboring black-ruled nations like Zimbabwe. "We know he's just kidding," said Jeff Mutandari, who heads the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions. "The truth is, he wants to protect American investments."

Here, as in South Africa (where Bishop Desmond Tutu complained that Reagan acts as if "the great big white chief of old can tell us black people that we don't know what is good for us"), disbelief almost beyond anger greets the persistent claims by U.S. and British leaders that they oppose sanctions out of concern for black Africans.

The skepticism is especially strong in Zimbabwe. While Reagan rejects economic pressure against South Africa, his administration is using it, in a fit of pique over a minor recent diplomatic *faux pas*, against this landlocked, black-led African nation that is already struggling to defend itself from economic and military destabilization by neighboring South Africa.

The U.S. acted to withhold \$14 million in promised aid for Zimbabwe about 10 days before Reagan declared, in his July 22 speech, that he has asked the U.S. Agency for International Development "to determine what needs to be done, and what can be done to expand the trade, private investment and transport prospects of southern African landlocked nations." The aid cut was U.S. retaliation for a Zimbabwean official's criticism of U.S. policy voiced at the American embassy's Independence Day reception here.

The July 4 speech by Zimbabwe's minister of youth, sports and culture said that an America truly imbued with the spirit of its founding fathers would stop "overt and covert support for the racist [South African] regime" and endorse sanctions. He also

suggested it is hypocritical for the U.S. government, which has used economic pressure against the Soviet, the Polish and most recently the Nicaraguan government, not to do the same again in South Africa. His words weren't much harsher than those heard in Congress during the recent American sanctions debate.

Former President Jimmy Carter, who happened to be in Harare with a private foreign aid group, joined U.S. and other Western embassy officials in walking out on the speech. The U.S. embassy said later that Zimbabwe had violated an advance agreement that there be no political speeches, only brief and friendly toasts. The official's other offense was inflicting boredom; he read his seemingly interminable speech in a monotone voice without looking up from his 17 index cards of text.

The administration's harsh response to a few critical words from Zimbabwe's democratically-elected government contrasts dramatically with its refusal to take any punitive steps against South Africa. It was all the more striking because Zimbabwe offers a model for the negotiated settlement Reagan says he wants in South Africa.

Prime Minister Robert Mugabe's government—which is Marxist-Leninist in principle but accepts a mixed economy with a strong role for private capital and practice—came to power in 1980 in democratic elections that followed an agreement between black freedom fighters and the white minority government of Rhodesian Front leader Ian Smith. Smith, whose regime was responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of black Zimbabweans, still sits in Parliament under a constitutional compromise that set aside 20 of the 100 seats for the country's 1-2 percent white minority.

In Washington Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker, chief architect of the anti-sanctions constructive engagement policy, responded with a vigor against Zimbabwe that he has never shown against South Africa. Calling the official's speech "unacceptable diplomatic behavior," he suspended signing agreements to provide Zimbabwe with funds for family planning, agricultural development and other aid programs. The money will be restored, the U.S.

now says, only if Zimbabwe sends an apology addressed to the U.S. government.

The U.S. rejected as inadequate Prime Minister Mugabe's statement that his government apologized to Carter for the statement's timing but not "for criticizing Mr. Reagan for refusing to impose sanctions."

Information Minister Nathan Shamuyarira said Zimbabwe valued U.S. aid and will regret its loss, but also said it isn't as severe as one might believe because the U.S. program was designed "not to strengthen the new order here but to strengthen the status quo."

The swift U.S. economic retaliation for a few critical words is one reason many Zimbabweans doubt that Reagan believes his own anti-sanctions rationale. Some ex-

ports, including the authors of a sanctions study issued in Harare in late July by the Canadian government's foreign aid agency CIDA, reject the most dire predictions about the fiscal fallout from sanctions.

While sanctions foes warn that South Africa would retaliate against black-led neighbors, the Canadian report points out that the nine nations of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference have already suffered \$10 billion in damage over the last five years from South African military violence and economic sabotage. CIDA said that the right kinds of foreign aid, particularly for improving transport links, can cushion countries against sanctions' full effects.

The question is one of degree: no one denies that the economies of Zimbabwe—and Swaziland, Botswana and Zambia—will be severely hurt by economic pressure on South Africa. Zimbabweans, having lived through the liberation war and sanctions against the Smith regime (see accompanying story), know the implications far better than Reagan, who made his usual quota of factual blunders during his sanctions speech. For example, Reagan mistakenly said that 65 percent of Zimbabwe's exports go through South Africa. The actual figure is about 90 percent.

But Zimbabweans also know that apartheid's overthrow will reduce their dependence on South Africa. Mozambique's nearby ports, Bira and Maputo, are this country's closest outlets to the sea. Yet Zimbabwe is forced to ship through South Africa because the *contra*-style Mozambique National Resistance, financed by South Africa, has repeatedly sabotaged road and rail links in Mozambique. Zimbabwe's third city, Mutari, is about 200 miles from Bira. Yet factory owners interviewed there say that they commonly import raw materials and export finished goods through South African ports more than 1,000 miles away.

Given the cost of destabilization, a strong case can be made that apartheid's speedy overthrow is the most important precondition for economic development in this region.

But economics simply isn't the primary issue for Zimbabweans who so recently fought to overthrow a white government. "If we are going to achieve the quickest elimination of apartheid, let us have unemployment in this country even if it means going hungry," said Deputy Minister of Labor Alexio Mudzingwa in a Zimbabwe Parliament debate on economic sanctions that, by coincidence, took place the day after Reagan spoke.

Steve Askin is African correspondent for Pacific News Service and the National Catholic Reporter.

Sanctions worked in Rhodesia

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher—with President Ronald Reagan, the last major holdout in the international campaign for economic sanctions against South Africa—singles out white minority-ruled Rhodesia to prove her point that sanctions don't work.

But white businessmen and women in independent Zimbabwe, formerly Rhodesia, tell a different story. Six years after independence, they are willing to talk about their 14-year battle to keep the Rhodesian economy afloat in the face of worldwide economic sanctions.

The immediate impact of sanctions was devastating, they say. Between 1965, when sanctions were imposed, and 1966, Rhodesian exports fell in value by 38 percent, with tobacco, one of the country's leading export earners, the biggest casualty. According to E.G. Cross, an economist for Rhodesia's Agricultural Marketing Authority from 1965 to 1980, the volume of tobacco produced fell by one-half, while its value declined by two-thirds.

John Graylin, chairman of the Tobacco Export Promotion Council in 1965, claims

that sanctions "disrupted our tobacco industry terribly. Prices fell alarmingly. We couldn't sell it. We had a big stockpile.... Then we started to have to sell it under the counter"—but at a tremendous discount.

Rhodesia's covert trading partners "held us to ransom," Graylin adds. And by all accounts, South Africa—the most notorious sanctions buster—demanded the highest ransom.

"The South Africans exploited the situation from the word go," says Cross. "For many South African businessmen, sanctions against Rhodesia were a boon—a tremendous thing."

After recovering from the initial shock of sanctions, the manufacturing sector began to produce locally goods that previously had been imported. But the vast majority of import substitution industries were equipped to produce only consumer goods. Most industrial machinery and a significant proportion of essential raw materials continued to be imported.

By the mid-'70s, Rhodesia had "come to the crunch line," one businessman claimed. Growth was tapering off. New technology could not be obtained, and the lack of spare parts was an ever-present problem. "Major industries were suffering in their volumes and in their prices," he said. The country had "begun to run out

Continued on page 22

By Pat Sidley

JOHANNESBURG

AS THE ABORTIVE MISSION OF Britain's Sir Geoffrey Howe here ended last week, South African President P.W. Botha once again petulantly told the world that not enough credit had been given to South Africa's reform. But KwaNdebele—a dusty, desperately poor “Bantustan” or “homeland”—lends the lie to Botha's claims.

KwaNdebele is a tiny rural slum about one hour's drive northeast of Johannesburg. It is little more than a few farms and eroded hills crammed with shanties that house nearly half a million blacks resettled from other areas. The residents of KwaNdebele either moved from other Bantustans because they were the “wrong ethnic group” or were forced off white-owned farms when their labor was replaced by machines. Others were squeezed out of the cities through housing shortages and the government's policy of influx control.

It has little industry of its own and almost no employment opportunities. Those few with jobs migrate daily to the industrial complex surrounding Johannesburg and the Wipwatersrand, sometimes commuting up to 10 hours a day in buses and trains.

In May the civil war erupted in KwaNdebele when the government announced that this hodgepodge of shanties and discarded people was to be given independence on December 11, thereby creating a fifth so-called independent “country,” a move in line with the original apartheid dream of the policy's architect, Dr. Hendrik Verwoerd.

Since the announcement, at least 160 people have died, and security force repression in the area is at its most severe, causing many of those deaths and leaving hundreds incarcerated in prisons without charge or trial. More than two-thirds of those killed died in clashes between the heavily armed black vigilantes loyal to Chief Minister Simon Skhosana (the would-be prime minister of the “country”) and militant teenagers known everywhere as comrades.

Many people claim that the vigilantes, known as the Mbokhoto, operate not only with the blessing of South Africa's security forces but with their active assistance. The government insists that security forces have not killed anybody and have injured only eight and that the deaths (they claim 32 in the first five weeks of the emergency that began June 12) are “black-on-black” violence.

Black civil servants and white farmers united

Government administration has broken down entirely in KwaNdebele with a two-week strike by black civil servants demanding the resignation of the “homeland's” cabinet and an end to plans for independence.

KwaNdebele's 100 or so schools have been empty as students boycott classes. Although primary school children returned to school last Wednesday, secondary school children are waiting for their comrades to be released from detention before they return to school.

Conservative white farmers in the area have publicly voiced their alarm at the chaos and bloodshed, and have put heavy pressure on the South African government to halt independence.

Church leaders also have recently attempted to dissuade the South African government from its present course of action, although they remain pessimistic that the government will take appropriate action. A day of prayer service called by church leaders for Sunday, July 27, in KwaNdebele was disrupted by South African security forces operating together with the Mbokhoto.

Leading the opposition to independence is Prince James Mahlangu, a member of the Ndebele royal family. Though a traditional leader, Prince James has forged alliances with both the white farmers and the “comrades,” and is preparing to take power if Skhosana falls. The most feared of who are frequently termed “mafia gangsters” in

SOUTH AFRICA

Cycle of violence fuels unrest in disintegrating KwaNdebele

Skhosana's cabinet was Minister of the Interior Piet Ntuli, a leader of the vigilante group. As *In These Times* went to press, it was reported that Ntuli had been killed by a car bomb, eliminating one of the area's most awkward problems.

He had twice been charged with murder—once for killing his own night-watchman and once for killing a rival politician—but was acquitted on technicalities both times. Charges of assault and murder have been laid against Ntuli for leading a vigilante raid on Moutse (which has since been incorporated into KwaNdebele) in which 26 people died and hundreds were abducted and flogged (some to death) on soapy floors at the community hall in the KwaNdebele “capital” of Siyabuswa.

Ntuli also faced charges of large-scale auto theft and of hoarding weapons. Despite his involvement in vigilante atrocities—documented in affidavits—he remained a senior member of the cabinet until his demise last week.

The Mbokhoto vigilantes are made up of shopkeepers and small traders in KwaNdebele whose licenses depend on the largesse of the notoriously corrupt nepotistic regime. The Mbokhoto stand to gain a share of the profits of huge handouts from South Africa when KwaNdebele becomes independent. According to KwaNdebele residents, the vigilante reign of terror has included assaulting and murdering opponents of independence. The vigilantes abducted hundreds of children to detention camps, where they were forced to walk on burning coals, and forced circumcision on adult men who have not been through the tribal schools.

The grisly necklace

In the past month, comrades have tried to swing the balance of power away from the vigilantes. At least 40 Mbokhoto have been

killed by gangs of comrades, chiefly by “necklacing,” a method of execution in which an automobile tire filled with gasoline is put around the victim's neck and ignited. Shops once owned by Mbokhoto members are now burned-out shells, and wrecked vehicles that once belonged to Mbokhoto members litter the streets.

A description from a comrade illustrates the cycle of violent retribution: “On Saturday night more than 200 boys and girls were guarding the village against the vigilantes. Five vigilante boys arrived. They told us they had run away and had now come to join us. They said they had long been wanting to leave Mbokhoto and run to us, but their leader threatened to kill any boys who ran away. We asked whether they were present at the detention camp when certain comrades were pushed onto fire, made to walk on hot coals. They said they were there.

“They said some people had died, but they did not know their names,” he continued. “Some of the leaders of our group asked them how they could live when others had died. They explained that they had defected. The comrades asked why they had not defected before. The chairman of our group said we must not kill the group [of defectors], even though they had killed us.

“However, people from the crowd refused to listen to him. There was a commotion, and four of them escaped into the night. People converged on the remaining boy. Some people poured petrol on him and he tried to run away, but he was followed

by a crowd of people. Then I saw him run away. He was burning like a torch as he ran,” he said.

In an apparently futile attempt to contain the problem, the country's most severe emergency restrictions have been placed on KwaNdebele, forcing virtual house arrest on the entire population. Hundreds of people have been detained and a heavy military presence dominates the Bantustan. South African security forces, in their zeal to crack down on dissidents, actually raided the royal Kraal—a small, traditional African village—and woke the elderly king and interrogated him.

The Progressive Federal Party has now called for a judicial commission of inquiry into the area—a call supported by the white farmers who have already made their views known to the government at the highest level. Reports from those who have met with Botha's cabinet members reinforce the belief that even the government recognizes the monster to which it gave birth from its unholy conception in social engineering that is called apartheid. And it is out of this broken landscape of shattered lives that the comrades and vigilantes have emerged. Ironically, in the midst of the commotion the South African government is building an independence stadium outside Siyabuswa. It is here that in December the government expects the people of KwaNdebele to celebrate their freedom. ■

Pat Sidley is a freelance journalist who works for the Weekly Mail in Johannesburg.

The vigilante reign of terror has included assault and murder. Vigilantes abducted hundreds of children to detention camps, where they were forced to walk on burning coals. They forced circumcision on adult men who have not been through the tribal schools.

Ten Years of
COEVOLUTION
Quarterly

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1974–1984

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By Gregory N. Heires

LA PAZ, BOLIVIA



WITH THE DEPLOYMENT OF some 160 U.S. troops in Bolivia to assist in anti-narcotics operations, the Reagan administration has recently escalated its campaign against the cocaine trade. The limited success of the operation, however, suggests that the U.S. should prepare for a long, possibly futile, war.

In Bolivia, "Operation Blast Furnace," a 60-day battle against cocaine traffickers in the Beni jungle region by U.S. and Bolivian forces, prompted domestic criticism for the government of Victor Paz Estenssoro. In the past, U.S.-sponsored efforts in other producer nations, such as Peru and Colombia, have sparked similar opposition. Besides facing political problems, the U.S. war on coke is in a real sense up against the social and economic fabric of the producer countries where cocaine dollars constitute a critical source of employment and foreign exchange.

The U.S. government has thrown millions of dollars into its international anti-narcotics drive. The money has gone toward equipping and training foreign anti-drug squads, funding operations to destroy clandestine airstrips, eradicating coca crops, setting up crop substitution programs, sponsoring educational drives and providing cocaine-sniffing dogs.

In the last several years, the Reagan administration's campaign against drugs in South America has been besieged by enormous obstacles, including resistance from peasant producers, lack of cooperation from local officials and violent retaliation from the drug mobs.

Additionally, South American government officials often resent U.S. pressure to combat the illicit drug trade, complaining that the economic assistance they receive is inadequate and the U.S., as the world's main cocaine consumer nation, is not making a serious effort to curb demand, which they argue is at the root of the problem.

The U.S. campaign is also attacking centuries of tradition. The coca plant, the raw material for producing cocaine, used to be known as the "sacred plant of the Incas." After Spanish colonizers arrived in South America, they soon discovered that coca served as a work stimulant and a hunger suppressant for Indians toiling in the mines that eventually helped finance industrialization in Europe. Today, tens of thousands of peasants and miners in Peru and Bolivia chew coca leaves while at work.

Though profits from the drug trade are mostly deposited in foreign bank accounts, the economies of producer countries remain dependent on cocaine dollars. That much

is recognized by the Bolivian ambassador to the U.S., Fernando Illanes, who says Operation Blast Furnace will cause economic and political upheaval in his country, where an abrupt fall in coca prices at the end of last year led the official value of the dollar to jump by 30 percent. Ambassador Illanes says the destruction of coca plants will deprive peasants of a profitable source of income, condemning them to poverty.

The export of coca paste has an estimated net balance of payment effect of \$650 million in Bolivia, while legal exports for this year will probably be less than \$500 million. With the decline of prices for Bolivia's traditional major exports, natural gas and tin, the "narco-economy" is ever more crucial for ordinary Bolivians who earn an average of less than \$30 per month (see accompanying article).

With official unemployment at 20 percent, the coca economy acts as a safety valve. Unemployed miners, for instance, are flocking to Chaparé, the coca region where an estimated 200,000 families live off the drug trade. There they find work as coca stompers, spending 10 hours a day earning \$12 by stepping on coca leaves in a vat filled with kerosene and sulfuric acid to convert the leaves into coca paste, which is eventually transformed into cocaine. Alternatively, they find work in transportation or other small businesses, such as grocery store or auto repair shops, that spring up in response to the influx of "narco-dollars."

For the Reagan administration, President Paz would seem to be a good ally. The previous government led by Hernan Siles Zuazo, who signed an agreement with the U.S. for an \$88 million five-year program to fight the cocaine trade, did not uproot a single coca plant, according to the U.S. State Department. In one disastrous attempt to control coca production Chaparé was put under military control in August 1984. The campaign began shortly after Sen. Paula Hawkins (R-FL) in a visit to Paz threatened that the U.S. would cut off aid to Bolivia because of its lack of progress in the fight against drugs. The Chaparé operation was eventually scrapped after peasants forced the military to withdraw; one general resigned, saying he would not be forced to kill Bolivian peasants because of foreign pressure.

While Paz supports the U.S. campaign more than his predecessor did, the war against cocaine in Bolivia is still very much in the early stages. During the first 10 days of Operation Blast Furnace, only two cocaine labs were seized and just one person arrested, a 17-year-old teenager. The time lag between the arrival of U.S. transport planes carrying six Black Hawk helicopters for the campaign and the actual initiation of the operations allowed cocaine traders time to escape. According to one report,

Roberto Suarez, the reputed Bolivian "King of Cocaine," might have fled the Beni region even earlier because of a tip from government insiders. Meanwhile, U.S. officials with the Agency for International Development complain that a U.S. crop substitution program cannot get off the ground until coca eradication campaigns are completed.

Coca violence in Peru

In Peru, U.S. attempts to control coca production and to promote alternative crops have fared no better than in Bolivia. The government of President Alan Garcia Perez has, however, made headway in law enforcement. Last year, for example, the explosion of a cocaine complex in Lima led to the arrest of alleged cocaine "godfather" Reynaldo Rodriguez Lopez and the implication of three directors of the Peruvian Investigative Police, the local equivalent of the FBI. Drug money in Peru is the main source of foreign exchange on the financial market, accounting for up to \$800 million a year.

The U.S.-sponsored coca eradication and alternative crop programs have been carried out in the Upper Huallaga valley, located 200 miles northeast of Lima. With 60,000 hectares devoted to coca production, the region is perhaps the world's largest coca production center. A sturdy plant growing along hillsides, Peruvian coca can be harvested four times a year and it is the country's most profitable cash crop.

With coca harvesters earning as much as six times the wages of agricultural workers on Peru's coast, it is no wonder that eradication and alternative crop schemes have been opposed by local producers. In the city of Tocache, for example, the opening of a local office of a U.S.-supported anti-drug police squad led to a nine-day strike by local banks and businesses, culminating

in the stoning of the office by a crowd of 3,000.

Violence in the Huallaga area has seriously jeopardized efforts to control the local drug trade. Last April, five police officials were blown away on a local highway. In November 1984, armed men killed 15 members of a U.S.-backed coca eradication team and a few days later the mutilated bodies of four U.S.-paid surveyors were found, prompting the temporary closing of the program. In recent years, police stations have been bombed, local mayors have been assassinated and farmers have been threatened or killed, making prospects for the future success of anti-narcotics programs look bleak.

Colombian mafia not busted

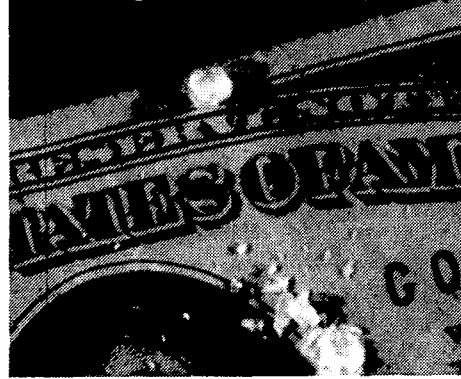
In Colombia, where Bolivian and Peruvian coca has traditionally been refined into cocaine, the drug mafia has reacted violently to attempts to curb the illicit trade, though traffickers have generally laid low since April 1984 when Justice Minister Rodrigo Lara Bonilla was gunned down on a Bogota highway by two men riding motorcycles. The killers were presumed to have been contracted by the drug mob because the minister had been waging a single-handed war on drugs. Following the assassination, the government announced a "war without quarter" against the country's drug traders.

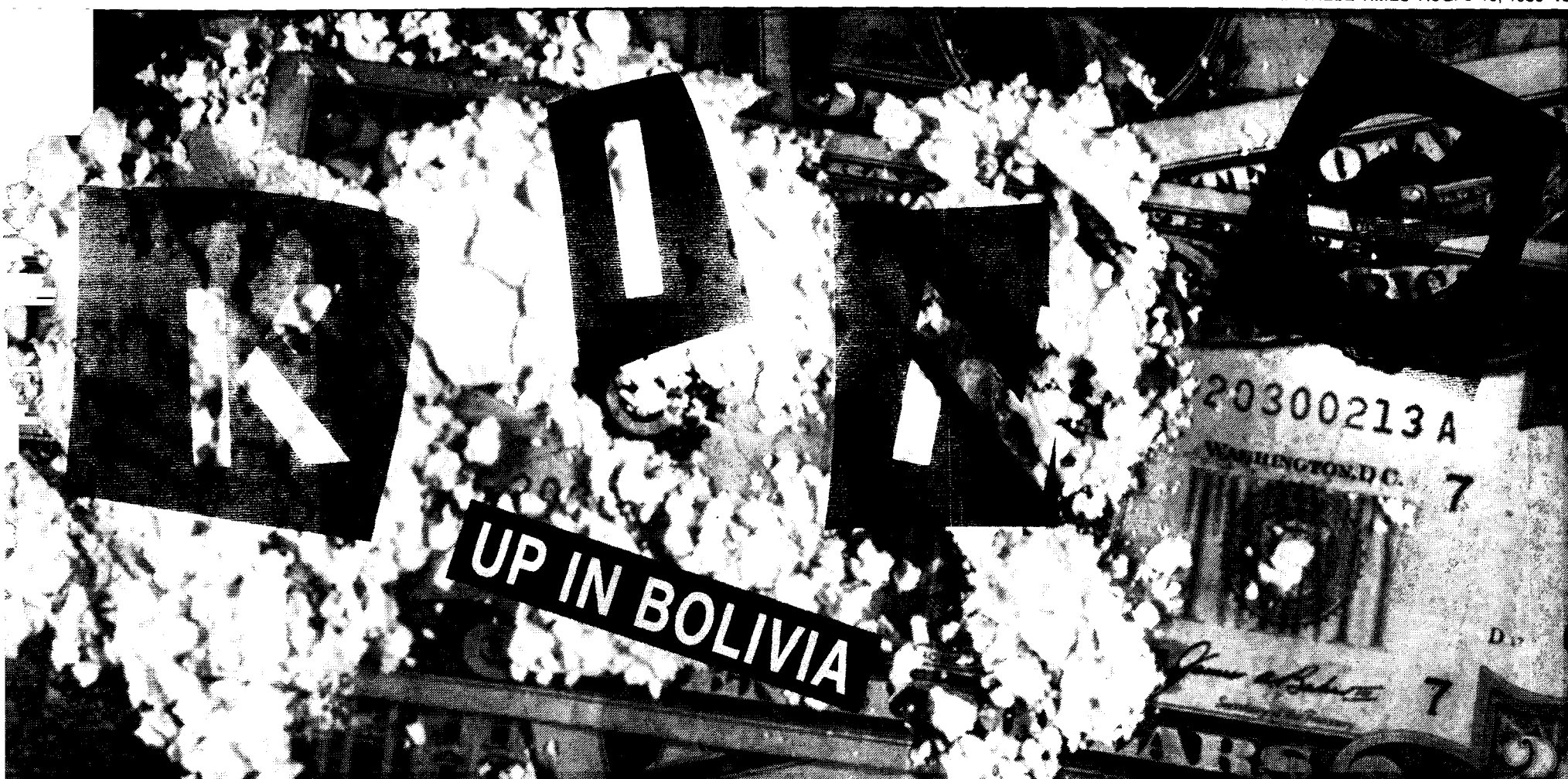
About 3,500 people are currently held on drug charges in Colombia, which controls about 75 percent of the cocaine entering the U.S. The alleged drug dealers in the Colombian jails, however, are mostly small-time operators. The major drug barons remain at large. Meanwhile, the mafia has threatened to assassinate Colombian Supreme Court justices if they fail to abrogate an extradition treaty with the U.S.

In addition to intimidating and killing local officials, the Colombia mafia has directed its ire at U.S. personnel. After the Colombian government announced in November 1984 that six nationals would be extradited to the U.S., the U.S. embassy in Bogota started getting threatening phone calls. On November 25, a car bomb exploded in front of the embassy, killing one woman and injuring five other people. Ten diplomats and their families left Bogota following the threats.

Clearly, the U.S. government must do more than uproot coca plants and destroy clandestine laboratories to curb the cocaine trade. Falling mineral prices and the growing debt burden are making South American producers ever more dependent on "narco-dollars." And as long as there is demand in the United States, where an estimated 5,000 people try cocaine for the first time each day, the drug mafia will continue to smuggle drugs into the U.S. ■

Narco-dollars are a critical source of employment and foreign exchange.





By Gregory N. Heires

LA PAZ, BOLIVIA

LONG REGARDED AS AN OUTCAST by the world's banks, Bolivia has apparently been welcomed back into the international financial community. With the recent signing of a stand-by loan of more than \$100 million, the Bolivian government won the International Monetary Fund's approval in mid-June for its anti-inflationary economic policy, theoretically opening the way for loans from other financial institutions.

While Bolivian President Victor Paz Estenssoro's stabilization plan has won plaudits abroad, however, it hinges at home upon an assault on organized labor. Bolivia continues to be a country with deep, underlying social tensions, and the government's attempt to carry about a political and economic reordering of Bolivian society is taking its highest toll on the poor majority.

Paz, president of the poorest country in South America, oversees an economic mess. Its economy long-dedicated to exporting primary goods, Bolivia has been unable to develop a local economy of any real significance, partly due to its small internal market. A few years ago the government stopped issuing coins because production lagged behind inflation. In 1984, Bolivia imported European-manufactured pesos at \$29 million, a cost higher than the bills' nominal value. Today, up to 40 percent of the labor force depends on a cocaine trade to earn a living (see accompanying article).

With natural gas and tin accounting for 90 percent of the country's exports, Bolivia's economy almost fell apart late last year with the dramatic drop in world oil and tin prices. The government estimates that lower prices reduced this year's exports from about \$1 billion to \$450 million.

"We've taken a terrible beating," says Minister of Planning Gonzalo Sanchez de Lazada, who heads the government's economic team. "I don't think there is another country that has been hit as badly in the external sector."

With inflation running at just 7 percent this year (the lowest in Latin America), the Paz government has undeniably made enormous strides in bringing order to the Bolivian economy. In August 1985 the government faced a hyperinflation rate that would have hit 25,000 percent by year's end.

The government's "New Economic Policy" consists of the usual measures favored by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), including a free exchange rate, lifting trade barriers and slashing government spending. Following the fall in tin prices last year, Paz declared that "the 'Golden Age' of tin is over." And Sanchez de Lazada says the

"Achilles' heel" of the government stabilization program is the *Corporacion Minera de Bolivia* (COMIBOL), the inefficient state mining company, which traditionally accounts for more than 60 percent of Bolivia's tin exports.

Money down the hole

The government estimates that COMIBOL loses about \$100 million a year. It plans to close mines and reduce the corporation's labor force from 30,000 to 10,000. In making that move, however, the government has put itself on a direct collision course with the Bolivian Workers Center, whose Spanish acronym is COB, which is historically regarded as the most powerful trade union in Latin America.

Government officials readily admit that official state policies involve an inevitable confrontation with COB, possibly the strongest body in Bolivian public life. Luiz Añez Alvarez, a member of Paz' National Revolutionary Movement (MNR), says, "In the previous government, the COB took up an anarchistic position and infringed upon the powers of the state. This anarchy has to be stopped."

Critics say the government policies unjustly burden the poor and represent a capitulation to—or even an outright alliance with—foreign interests. They contend that the government's present course constitutes a clean break with the MNR's past, signaling an end to the era of nationalism in Bolivian politics.

"The government is dismantling everything it did in 1959," says Javier Medina of the Institute of Bolivian Social History, referring to the 1952 revolution in Bolivia. Following a popular uprising that year, Paz assumed the presidency and his government later instituted universal suffrage, initiated an agrarian reform and nationalized the mining industry. The MNR set up COMIBOL, and the day after Paz was sworn into office the COB was formed.

Broadly, the MNR's political project has consisted of promoting a multi-class, nationalist movement based on an industrial process led by an emerging local bourgeoisie. Thirty years later, however, a new MNR government has begun to dismantle COMIBOL, and has all but declared war on the COB.

So far, some 5,000 miners have abandoned their camps as a result of the government's assault on COMIBOL. Some miners have been laid off, while others have retired voluntarily, induced by severance pay and the government's offer of extra payments as high as \$500. The government has also cut supplies of replacement parts for mining equipment and stopped subsidizing four staple goods in the camps (bread, meat, rice and sugar), in effect forcing miners to leave their jobs through starvation.

The government is encouraging miners and their families to colonize lands in the western zone of Bolivia, and plans to set up a social emergency fund to provide unemployed miners with short-term work in labor-intensive mini-projects, such as digging ditches and installing irrigation systems. In a well-publicized event in mid-June, President Paz held a ceremony to praise some 60 mining families who were leaving La Paz in a convoy of trucks en route to their new farm lands. Less publicized was the decision of dozens of families who left the Matilde mine and headed to La Paz or Orure without knowing where they would live or work in the future.

Unions in disarray

The Federation of Miners—traditionally the most combative union in the COB—has responded to the government's intent to dismantle COMIBOL by drawing up an alternative plan calling for increased productivity and upgraded machinery. At a congress held in May, veteran COB leader Juan Lechin resigned from his position as executive secretary of the federation, disagreeing with the organization's position. Though he retains his post in the COB, Lechin is possibly at the lowest point of his career. In the past he has resigned from office to win support for his position, but this time the federation upheld his resignation.

The federation's alternative plan, however, appears to have fallen on deaf ears within the government. And union threats to take over the mines—a tactic used in the past—would play into the hands of the government.

Facing such a determined government, the Bolivian labor movement is at perhaps its weakest historic moment. Last September, Paz implemented a state of siege in response to a two-week indefinite strike carried out by the COB. The government then broke the strike by gathering up 150 labor leaders—including Lechin—and whisking them away in military planes to the jungle. Today, the COB appears unable to put the workers in the streets, and discontent among the rank and file has probably never been higher.

The Paz government's efforts to hamstring the labor movement have been matched by measures to quell political opposition. Last year Paz signed a pact with Gen. Hugo Banzer, the former dictator who came to power in a Brazilian-backed coup in 1971 and headed the Bolivian government until 1978. The pact created an alliance with Banzer's right-wing National Democratic Action (ADN) party, giving the MNR/ADN coalition control of the Bolivian congress.

With Bolivia's left fragmented and discredited by the record of the previous center-left government headed by Hernan

Siles Zuazo, the only real organized congressional opposition is the centrist Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), which won 10 percent of the vote in the 1985 elections. (The MIR actually formed part of Siles' Popular Democratic Union coalition government, also supported by the Communist Party of Bolivia. Headed by Jaime Paz Zamora, who served as vice president under Siles, the MIR supported the UDP government for only 11 months, enabling it to be relatively untarnished by the UDP experience.)

The MIR's potential for presenting itself as an alternative to the MNR and the ADN has been improved by the recent passage of an electoral reform. The reform, which requires parties to have 50,000 registered members, or 5 percent of the electorate, to participate in the elections, threatens to make the country's left parties disappear, allowing the political scene to be dominated by the three main parties.

As President Paz moves to consolidate his power, the majority of Bolivians struggle with the social costs of the government's policies, dubbed "economic Pinochetism" by the COB and considered to constitute the strongest "shock" treatment ever to be applied in Latin America. In Bolivia, unemployment hovers at nearly 20 percent. This year's budget calls for no investment in housing, education and health—and only a minimum in agriculture. At the same time, some 60 percent of the budget is dedicated to debt payments, the military and the police.

"We're having to struggle with the most adverse conditions, and of course it's meant a great deal of sacrifice for the Bolivian people," says Minister Sanchez de Lazada, commenting on the severity of the program. "And the people who usually take the brunt of these types of crises—be they inflation or stabilization—are the poorest people."

Economist Juan Villarroel of the Institute of Investigations is more blunt: "What the government has managed to do is stabilize the country through the starvation of the people." Under the government's New Economic Policy enacted last August, wages of public workers were frozen but prices were left to respond to the magic of the market. While inflation has been reduced drastically, the purchasing power of Bolivians has fallen by 50 percent, according to the Association of Economists. The economy is in a recession, and the country is being inundated by foreign goods.

"Today there is food to buy," says Zenovia Silva, 28, a mother from a La Paz barrio, recalling the food shortages during the previous government. "But what we don't have is money to buy food. Meat and milk are now luxury items. These low salaries don't go anywhere."

Gregory N. Heires writes frequently on South American politics for *In These Times*.

EDITORIAL

Wealth triumphs, we lose

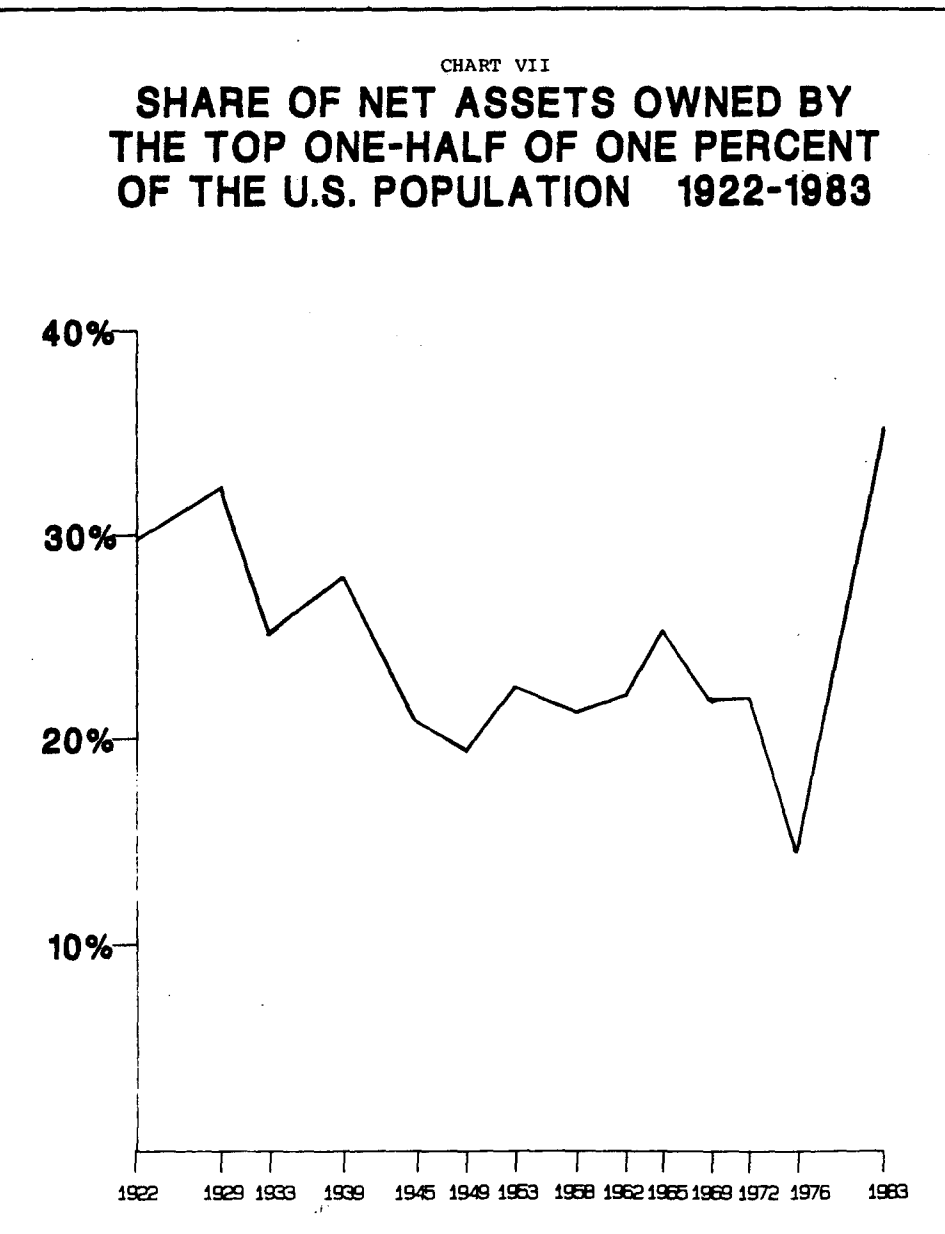
"The rich are different from us," F. Scott Fitzgerald told Ernest Hemingway in their classic exchange. "Yes," Hemingway replied, "they have more money."

More precisely, they have wealth—not just income, but property holdings that generate income. Recently the rich have become even more different from the rest of us. After nearly five decades of a slow decline in the percentage of total U.S. wealth held by the super-rich, the concentration of wealth has risen dramatically to the highest point in U.S. history.

This great reversal apparently has taken place in less than a decade, starting in the Carter years and continuing through Reagan. The extraordinarily rapid and large shift in wealth coincided with growing income inequality, a reversal of another decades-long gradual decline in income disparity (although still more unequal than other major industrial countries). "Somewhere between 1975 and 1978, the distribution of wages and salaries took a sharp U-turn," economists Bennett Harrison, Chris Tilly and Barry Bluestone wrote earlier this year. It is not simply chance that the rich have also gained political power in both parties during that same period.

Until now people have understandably focused on income woes, such as rising poverty or the "declining middle." But the new figures on wealth recently released by the Joint Economic Committee (JEC) are in the long run more serious and disturbing. Using numbers compiled in a careful Federal Reserve Board survey that details the richest families far better than Census Bureau studies, the JEC report divided wealth holders into the super-rich (the top .5 percent of households), the very rich (the next half percent), the rich (90th to 99th percentile) and "everyone else."

The super-rich in 1983 owned 35.1 percent of the wealth held by families, up from 25.4 percent in 1963 (and up even from the previous peak in 1929—ominously on the eve of the Great Depression). Yet even that dramatic figure understates the concentration of wealth, since it includes people's homes—the major asset for most of "everyone else," but one that is primarily a possession for use and is not liquid. Excluding personal residences, the super-rich held more than 45 percent



of all private wealth in 1983.

This elite of 420,000 households, with a minimum of \$2.5 million each in net assets, owned 58 percent of all unincorporated businesses, 46.5 percent of all personally owned corporate stock, 77 percent of the value of all trusts and 62 percent of state and local bonds. The next .5 percent—the very rich—owned 7 percent of the nation's wealth. The next 9 percent—the rich—held another 30 percent.

That left "everyone else" with 28 percent of the nation's wealth. But subtracting home values, the bottom 90 percent held only 16.7 percent of family-owned wealth. (To further accentuate inequalities, a recent Census study revealed

that the average white family has ten times the wealth of the average black family.)

Wealth has long been concentrated, but the new figures offer an explosive revelation: over the past 20 years the share of the nation's wealth held by the super-rich has increased by 38 percent. Meanwhile, the very rich and rich have slipped a little and "everyone else" has suffered a loss of 20 percent in its share of national wealth. Over that period, the JEC reported, "the richest .5 of 1 percent increased their average wealth-holding from \$3.59 to \$8.85 million.... That was... about 400 times the increase of families in the lower 90 percent of the wealth distribution."

The shift seems to have occurred after the mid-'70s. What happened then? The JEC study does not attempt to answer that question, but its report indicates that the super-rich gained most of their dramatically increased share of wealth from non-residential real estate and from business assets, that is, unincorporated businesses, partnerships and the like. Stocks, bonds and other assets grew much more slowly. The category of unincorporated "business assets" is shadowy: it probably includes such items as ownership of apartment buildings, commercial and office space and shopping malls.

Since the early '70s, workers' real incomes have largely stagnated as unemployment has risen. U.S. business has faltered as it has been integrated into a world economy that it—and the U.S. government—can no longer dominate as easily through any means, from military might to monetary policy. A swollen, bureaucratic management with little commitment to technological innovation or long-term strategic planning has increasingly operated a hollow corporate shell—as *Business Week* recently wrote—manipulating financial assets more than producing goods. Until recently poor corporate performance kept stock prices comparably depressed (the portion of the

wealth of the super-rich accounted for by stocks dropped from 19 percent in 1963 to 11 percent in 1983). In an inflationary time, real estate was attractive—and tax laws, starting with Carter and accelerating under Reagan, made it even more attractive.

David Gordon, co-author of *Beyond the Wasteland*, a left critique of the U.S. economy, argues that two different processes were underway. On the one hand, there was a general redistribution of income between the rich and workers. But on top of that there was a redistribution within the top 10 percent to the super-rich that reflected the greater ability of the super-rich to take advantage of a run-up in real estate values and, eventually, interest rates. The pattern is less like a simple left version of money being taken away from workers by rapacious bosses. It is more akin to an old populist perception of the redistribution of wealth through the power of financial interests, rent and land speculation, he suggested.

In any case, this may have contributed to what Northwestern University economist Ann Markusen has described as the growing power of financial interests at the expense of manufacturing in the U.S. economy. That process is even reflected within many U.S. manufacturing concerns.

Threats of great wealth

There are at least three good reasons to be not only concerned but outraged about this trend toward a greater concentration of wealth. First, greater equality is desirable in its own right. It creates a more cohesive community that gives all individuals a better chance of realizing their greatest potential.

Growing concentration of wealth also threatens democracy. From Thomas Jefferson ("legislators cannot invent too many devices for subdividing property") to former Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis ("We can either have democracy in this country or we can have great wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but we can't have both"), American democrats have warned against super-rich wealth. Even if managers—some of whom are among the super-rich—rather than stockholders have greater control over normal corporate operations, the concentration of wealth the JEC documents gives the super-rich tremendous economic power. It also, quite obviously, gives them enormous political clout that has in recent years been used to further increase their wealth.

But such concentration is bad for the economy as well. The diversion of much of the country's wealth into real estate speculation in the past decade has accelerated the downward spiral of manufacturing. There was no capital shortage for business, just a redirection. The now-sputtering economy, never as genuinely robust as Reagan claimed even at its peak, is in many ways a by-product of the new inequality of both wealth and income and testimony to the inadequacy of trickle-down strategies.

Real wealth lies in the capacity of people, using their hands, brains and tools, to create the things that they need. Property is a social creation that legitimates claims on that wealth and gives it different forms. British economist R.H. Tawney argued that of the many forms of property those that were most legitimate were those actively used by the owner for his or her work or household—payment for services, items of personal comfort, tools and land to work or rights of authors and inventors. "Passive" property—such as those of luck, monopoly, urban ground rents and royalties—were the least justifiable but increasingly dominant in modern society. This parasitical property that serves the super-rich distorts the economy from serving the needs of the majority.

The problem of increasingly concentrated wealth must be addressed for the sake of equality, democracy and a healthy economy. But the solution can come only with a change in the forms and rights of property.

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LETTERS

No escape

DAVID BENSMAN'S PIECE, "HOW TO ESCAPE steel's quagmire" (ITT, July 23), fails to live up to its title. The program he offers is the following: "Just a bit of encouragement—such as federal funding of research and development, strict enforcement of trade laws against dumping, firm resolve to bring down the dollar and loan guarantees for modernization projects like the Inland cold-running mill—and the steel industry could make profits once again."

This is a program that leaves ownership and control of investment decisions in the hands of the profit-maximizing corporations that have brought the steel industry to its present impasse. It is made up of nostrums similar to the panaceas such as accelerated depreciation, stretch-out of environmental compliance, etc., that have failed to solve steel's problems in the past. All these reforms tiptoe around the fact that steel is a capital-intensive enterprise that cannot be expected to return the rate of profit available in real estate speculation, oil and gas, and other opportunities for capital investment. Hence, so long as profit-maximization determines investment decisions, steel will stagnate.

It is true that the United Steelworkers of America advocates "just such a program" as Mr. Bensman. It is distressing that Mr. Bensman considers this program adequate—or adequate if there were added to it "a framework that would join its separate planks together." The USWA has succumbed to the steel companies' propaganda that the problem lies outside the corporate decisionmaking of the steel companies: in foreign imports, in environmental restrictions, in the tax code and the like. What kind of a *quid pro quo* for concessions is it to demand that "the steel companies agree to cooperate in a lobbying campaign to enlist federal support for the steel industry"?

The one bright spot in the union program described by Bensman is that "Federal and state governments, which for too long have watched the roads, bridges, water systems and other arteries of commerce within this country go to pieces, must commit to a major effort to rebuild our nation's infrastructure."

This demand was borrowed by the union from the far more adequate program of the TriState Conference on Steel. Tri-State, a coalition of rank-and-file trade unionists, churches and community groups, proposes: (1) recognition that private enterprise has abandoned the steel industry and cannot be expected to create the modernized facilities that are needed; (2) the use of eminent domain by locally-controlled public authorities to acquire the mills the companies no longer wish to run; (3) public participation in both capital and markets. (This is where the demand for rebuilding infrastructure fits in.)

This is a socialist program in that it begins from the demonstrated fact that capitalism can no longer do the job. It is a democratic program, because (unlike TVA, for example) it entrusts industrial management to locally-elected representatives of workers and the community. It is an innovative and creative program, which has won widespread backing in the Pittsburgh area among groups that used to be known for their unthinking conservatism.

On one point Bensman and TriState are in complete agreement: only the withdrawal of hundreds of millions of dollars from the arms race so that the same kind of effort can be made on behalf of peaceful economic development will bring about the revitalization of steel and American steelmaking communities.

Staughton Lynd
Niles, Ohio

In These Times is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

An irresponsible whim

YOUR EDITORIAL CRITICISM OF THE Supreme Court's sodomy ruling is off-base (ITT, July 23). *In These Times* should applaud the Supreme Court's finding because it puts the well-being of society over the irresponsible whim of the individual—something that is a fundamental goal of socialism. The logic of the primacy of individual freedom is what undergirds not only the so-called "privacy" right sodomizers (and other proponents of hetero- and homosexual permissiveness) advocate and is very close to the capitalist notion of economic relations (that is, the "free consent" of individuals in the economic relationship). Socialism affirms the primacy of the effects on society over this crass individualism, recognizing in the case of sodomy that the state's interest in preventing AIDS and other venereal diseases and preserving the uniqueness of the marital institution take precedence over what individuals want to do in the privacy of their apartments.

Dino Joseph Drudi
Washington, D.C.

David Moberg replies: Society can maintain its interests—public health, support of families and children or other goals—without suppressing the freedom of individuals. On the contrary, one of the overriding goals of socialism should be the expansion of the freedom of individuals as both private and social beings. There's no way to make a better society by oppressing its members.

Teamster tricks

THE LETTER FROM A FORMER TEAMSTERS union official calling Local 657 a "most democratic organization" (ITT, June 25) was well answered by David Moberg. I would like to add some specifics to illustrate what the "progressive" apologists for the union officialdom want to keep rank and file activists from "airing" in public.

Teamster Local 657 covers San Antonio and all of South Texas from Austin to the Rio Grande Valley. The membership is mainly Chicano, yet it is headed by one Raleigh Mull, an old-line race-baiter and Reagan booster. To assert that if the rank and file are dissatisfied with Mull, or others like him, they can simply vote them out ignores the effects of collusion with employers and intimidation tactics.

In last fall's Local 657 election, Mull beat the Chicano/Teamsters for a Democratic Union opposition with a wide variety of Nixon-style dirty tricks. Batches of patronage absentee ballots were cast by friends of Mull who were working on lucrative movie and pipeline jobs. Two

Chicano TDU activists, one of whom ran for union office, were fired on bogus charges by United Parcel Service, with the firings conveniently upheld by a joint union/management panel after the employer had vowed to get rid of the militant unionists. Last month, even the do-nothing National Labor Relations Board charged Local 657 officials with blacklisting a Chicano supporter of the opposition. Smear campaigns were used, such as one against the main opposition leader based on his "crime" of filing a successful civil rights suit in the '70s against the nation's largest truck line for its refusal at that time to hire Hispanics and blacks as over-the-road drivers.

Are dedicated unionists, who see a racist and Reaganite clique rule (and ruin) their union, supposed to refrain from fighting to get their union back? We should be thankful that the Teamster rank and file are increasingly rejecting this advice and are organizing themselves to win.

Ken Paff
Organizer, Teamsters for a Democratic Union
Detroit

Private politics

JAMES WEINSTEIN, IN HIS RESPONSE TO letters about Bernie Sanders' independent gubernatorial race in Vermont (ITT, July 9), says, "Our two major parties are not analogous to traditional European parties. There is no membership qualification, and there is no official party program or set of principles. The parties are...public, open to anyone who registers as a Democrat or Republican."

Weinstein is out of date. There is a powerful trend that he has missed toward making the Democratic and Republican parties more like traditional European political parties.

Alabama: A federal court this year upheld the Democratic Party's exclusion from the primary ballot of a candidate for party office who supports Lyndon LaRouche because his loyalty to the party was challenged.

California: On June 18 the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the state has no right to tell a political party how it should be organized: "Political parties are nothing more than voluntary associations of individuals who band together in pursuit of shared political goals.... The state may not interfere with the associational rights of political parties beyond what is necessary to assure honest and orderly elections."

Connecticut: Last year the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that if the Republican Party wants to let registered independents vote in the Republican primary, the state of Connecticut has no right to forbid it.

Georgia: This year the Democratic Party refused to let LaRouche candidates

enter the Democratic primary. The issue is now in federal court.

Hawaii: Election law gives party officials the right to keep any candidate out of that party's primary, if the party leaders feel the candidate doesn't support the party's principles.

Massachusetts: Election law says that anyone can get on the primary ballot for statewide office if he or she submits 10,000 signatures. However, the Democratic Party has a rule that says no one can run in the Democratic primary unless that person got 15 percent of the vote at the state convention. When a candidate for U.S. Senate got the signatures, the secretary of state still kept him off the ballot, since the Democratic Party said he hadn't received 15 percent at its state convention. The candidate sued, but lost in court. The court said Democratic Party rules take precedence over state election law.

New York: Since the '40s there has been a law on the books giving a party the right to expel ordinary members, if the party feels they are disloyal to the party. Some Democratic Party officials are thinking of using it again against LaRouche Democrats.

Virginia: For almost a decade now, all of the Democratic and Republican nominees for statewide office have been chosen by convention, not by primary.

Under the attack of LaRouche people, the Ku Klux Klan and Nazis, both the Democratic and Republican parties are moving in the direction of keeping hostile forces out. The courts are permitting this under the First Amendment and the theory that political parties are basically private organizations.

Richard Winger
San Francisco, Calif.

Women's choice

MUCH AS I APPRECIATED JON WIENER'S piece on the Sears case (ITT, July 9), I think it necessary to clarify one point. The argument between Rosalind Rosenberg and her critics is based less on whether or not Sears actually discriminated (although I believe it did) than on the content of her court testimony. In court, Rosenberg suggested that domestic ideology and roles, or women's "difference" could explain women's absence from certain jobs. Such a use of difference as a justification for inequality ignores class, race and ethnic distinctions in women's choices and flies in the face of the historical record. It is this misreading of the record that, in my judgment, has evoked the outcry of historians of women.

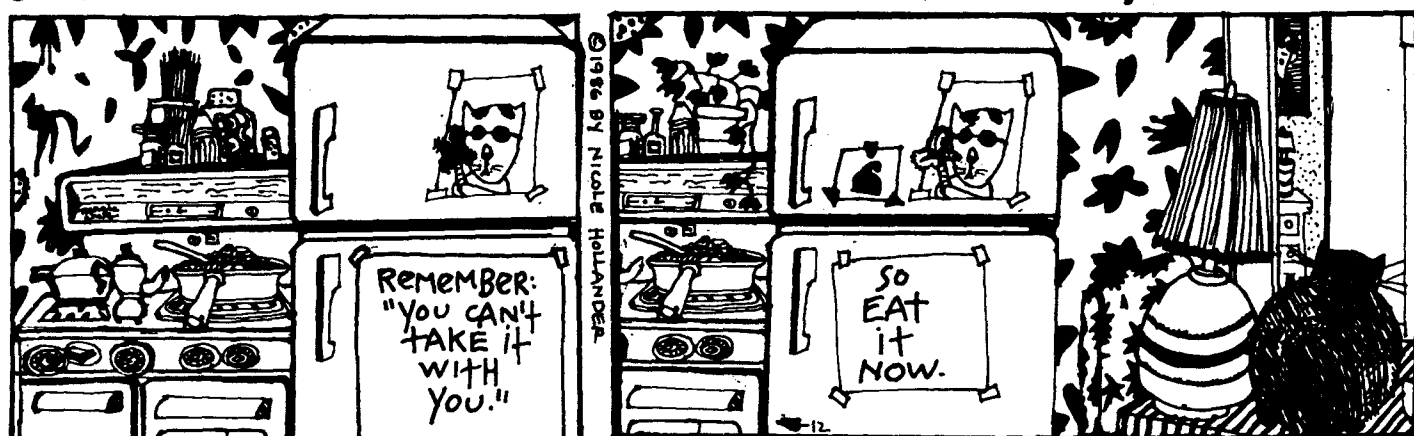
Alice Kessler-Harris
Hofstra University
Hempstead, N.Y.

Corrections

Due to a typographical error, the editorial in the July 23 issue read that "there has been no correlation for individual corporations between investment and taxes: the least taxed have often invested most and vice versa." It should have read that the *most* taxed have often invested most. Also in that issue, the photo appearing on page 16 should have been credited to Lionel Delevingne.

SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander



PERSPECTIVE

Israeli war on Syria seems inevitable to all analysts

By Rex B. Wingerter

ANALYSTS IN ISRAEL AND the U.S., from the political right to left, believe that war between Israel and Syria is inevitable. The only question is, when? Their reasons differ sharply, but each anticipates a preemptive Israeli strike against Syria, perhaps before the year's end.

Within Israel the argument focuses on Syria's unabashed military buildup. From 1979 to 1983, for example, Syria received \$10 billion in total arms imports, mostly from the Soviet Union. Israel, on the other hand, received only \$3.8 billion in arms during the same time. Moreover, Syria has 3,700 active main battle tanks compared to 3,600 for Israel and 2,750 major artillery pieces compared to 1,700 for Israel.

Syria's acquisition of long and medium range SS-21 missiles capable of striking deep inside Israel adds further worries. Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin recently warned that this new weaponry permits Syria to launch "massive attacks against population centers in Israel in addition to a limited occupation of territory." Rabin fears that Syria may feel confident enough to launch a lightning strike to reclaim the Golan Heights and force the U.S. and USSR to negotiate a settlement to the conflict.

Israel also points to Syrian provocations such as deploying sophisticated SAM mis-

siles near the Syria-Lebanon border that "curtailed" Israel's "freedom of flight over Lebanon," according to Israel's Chief of Staff Moshe Levi. Syria's construction in Lebanon of artillery and tank trenches near the Israeli border led one unidentified Israeli military authority to complain that President Hafez al-Assad "apparently believes that he can make small gains by operating just below the threshold that would trigger Israel's deterrence mechanism."

Still other military officials argue that Israel should strike Syria for its support of guerrilla actions against Israeli troops in south Lebanon and its involvement in the attempt to bomb an El Al airliner in London. These Israeli officials conclude that Syria's new military inventories should be destroyed before the military balance tilts further to Syria's advantage.

A short war for business?

But critics of Israel's foreign policy interpret Syria's moves in a different light and see reasons why Tel Aviv would welcome a war with Syria. Levi Morav, writing in the liberal Israeli newspaper *Al Ha'mishmar*, pointed out that Israel's sagging military industries could be aided by a "short war, lasting some two or three weeks." Such a war would provide employment and profits for many arms manufacturers that lost important export markets with the fall of Marcos in the Philippines and "Baby Doc" in Haiti.

Experts also disagree about Syria's military threat. Although Syria has

achieved numerical parity with Israel in land and air forces, U.S. military analyst Anthony Cordesman recently wrote, "Israel retains a major military edge over Syria," especially because of its efficient military organization, command and control system and electronic warfare capabilities, as well as its unsurpassed air power and technological base. Syria can now provoke and threaten but cannot equal Israel's military force capabilities.

These military realities make it plausible but not credible that Syria is preparing to grab back the Golan Heights. As Alex Fishman, military correspondent for *Al Hamishmar*, recently wrote, Syria must understand that if it ever moved its forces against the Golan a massive military reaction by Israel would be inevitable.

Syria remains vulnerable

Syria also has shown itself to be completely at the mercy of Israel's airpower. During Israel's Lebanon war Syria lost 80 warplanes in air-to-air combat while Israel lost not a single plane. Equally important was that Syria's air defense system was easily destroyed, exposing the country to a quick Israeli attack.

Syria had acquired advanced SAM missiles, but U.S. electronic countermeasures downed Libyan SAM-5s during the Gulf of Sidra clash earlier this year. It must be assumed that the Israelis possess the same jamming capabilities. This would mean that Syria no longer has a strategic air defense system against Israel.

Many observers suspect that Israel sought to draw the two countries into battle in November when Israeli warplanes shot down two Syrian MIG planes inside Syrian territory. Syria responded two days later by placing SAM-6s and SAM-8s in Lebanon. They were withdrawn for fear that they would serve as a pretext for a wider Israeli strike against Syria. Likewise, Israel's detention and interrogation of important Syrian officials after it skyjacked a Libyan aircraft may have

been designed to provoke Syria into action.

Finally, there is suspicion that Israel has had a hand in the wave of terrorist bombings that have rocked Damascus. President Assad reportedly admitted that more than 2,000 Syrians have died from terrorist bombings against trains and buses.

The U.S. role

Depressed international oil prices insure that no Arab petroleum-producing state could come to Syria's financial aid if war broke out with Israel. Israel, on the other hand, can always count on the U.S. to underwrite its war efforts.

This American component to Israel's strategic thinking is significant because of Syria's role in scuttling many U.S. Middle East initiatives. Syria is viewed as having "forced" the U.S. out of Lebanon, terminated the Israel-Lebanon treaty, frustrated Israeli-Jordanian talks and stymied Yassir Arafat's moderate PLO. Syria clearly stands in the way of any U.S.-Israeli hegemony over the Middle East.

This leaves the U.S. and Israel with one of two options. First, to accept Syria's proposal that Israel relinquish the Golan Heights to Syrian sovereignty in exchange for a non-belligerency treaty (involving the demilitarization of the Golan), along with the return of the West Bank to the Jordanians or Palestinians in exchange for peace. Or second, to launch a war and end Assad's pretensions of becoming a Middle East peacemaker.

Given Washington's commitment to preserve Israel's privileges and prerogatives in the Middle East, many observers are betting the Reagan White House will sanction an Israeli attack before the wet winter weather makes combat unmanageable.

Rex B. Wingerter is a Washington, D.C., journalist who writes regularly for *In These Times*.

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Since the law is political, why don't liberals admit it?

By Mark V. Tushnet

THE APPOINTMENT OF DANIEL MANION to the Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit and the nomination of Antonin Scalia to the Supreme Court have led people to consider what it means for someone to be qualified to be a judge. A right-wing ideologue, Manion is at best a competent small-town lawyer. In contrast, Scalia, though extremely conservative, does not seem to be quite so ideological, and he certainly is smarter than Manion.

But the importance of mere qualifications were overemphasized in the discussions of Manion's nomination. Sometimes the courts of appeals have to decide whether the case should be in the federal courts at all. But the public cares most about cases that involve politics and ideology—abortion, gay rights, affirmative action and the like. "Qualifications" are much less important than ideology on these questions.

Ideology and qualifications seem to be different because we think that politics and law are fundamentally different from each other. Qualifications have to do with law, while ideology has to do with politics. The terms of the Democrats' objections to Manion reinforced that understanding because they treated Manion's qualifications as the basic objection.

Thus, as long as someone with right-wing views has the basic technical quali-

cations, he or she can become a judge. The broader political consequences may be more important and may explain why the Democrats have set the terms of the debate as they have. Treating law and politics as distinct stabilizes the existing political order. In the political system, people strike bargains (to the systematic disadvantage of some). Treated as political bargains, these deals have no particular moral standing. But once they are translated into the legal system, they create rights and obligations are, at least temporarily, removed from political debate.

If we denied that law and politics are different, we might open to political debate every arrangement in the society that is backed up by the law—including the distribution of property rights. Workers struggling to deal with the consequences of plant closings know that the ideology of property law, which grants almost complete power to close plants to management, makes their struggles harder than an open political fight would be.

By treating the issues of Manion's and Scalia's appointments as ones of technical qualifications, the liberals who have opposed Manion reinforce a troubling vision of society. Indeed, that may be why they have made qualifications rather than ideology the focus of their concern. If they talked about the ways in which the legal system is itself political, they would not be liberals.

Mark V. Tushnet is professor of law at Georgetown University Law Center.

ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn

Fings Ain't Wot They Used to Be

At least one could say of the British royal family, in the old days, that it maintained some decent standards of regal hauteur and general standoffishness toward the rest of the human race. If you are going to have a king or a queen you might as well have the real thing, and not some backslapping democrat who insists on bicycling to work, moving among the people on a first-name basis and otherwise demonstrating the common touch.

I had not been aware, until I turned on the television set last week, of the depths of the revolting vulgarity to which the royal family has plunged. Not only did the Duke and Duchess of York, previously known as Andrew and Fergie, bowl along in a coach containing a teddy bear with a blue ribbon, worse still, the back of the coach had a picture of a satellite dish and a placard saying "Phone Home." By such deplorable standards Henry V would have fought at Agincourt with a beer commercial painted on the front of his shield.

When the couple embarked on the airplane taking them to the Azores, no doubt fretting that British workmanship would take them straight to the bottom of the Atlantic, the plane's tail fins flapped open in a coarse manner to reveal the words "Just Married." Next thing we know, the Duchess of York will be on the *Playboy* centerfold and the Duke will be confiding his sexual problems to Dr. Ruth and flogging intimate videos of Home Life with the Royals.

Remembrance of Cocked Snooks Past

There seems to have been remarkably few signs of disrespect evinced by the British people toward the costly nuptials. It was not thus in the old days. My father, Claud, used to describe with triumph his successful intervention in the hugely pompous Jubilee of George V, celebrating 25 years of that monarch's uninspiring reign. He and a fellow conspirator studied the intended route of the procession of carriages traveling through central London. Then, attired as workmen employed by the city of London, they entered a newspaper office on Fleet Street—which was on the route—carrying a banner which they announced had to be strung across the street in company with the profuse bunting already deployed. The newspaper's staff gazed with satisfaction upon the banner's patriotic message, which declared "Long Live Our King," as my father and his friend managed to get it hoisted over the road.

On the day of the procession the crowds in Fleet Street were vast and it was only with difficulty that the two were able to reach the string running down from the banner and round into an alley. Judging their moment by the enthusiastic bellows of the throng, they pulled the string. After a slight pause there was a rolling howl of outrage and they took to their heels before they could be torn to pieces. The banner had opened in timely fashion right in front of the royal coach, to reveal the words "25 Years of Hunger, Misery and War." The movie news cameras traveling right behind the coach caught the moment satisfactorily and it is thus preserved on film.

After Amerika, AIDS

The Soviets, who have been blamed at one time or another for almost everything bad in the world today, are now being accused of spreading AIDS as a way of eroding the West, destroying capitalism and hoisting the hammer and sickle over Pennsylvania Avenue.

Writing in the Israeli newspaper

Ma'ariv, a jurist called Mordechai Horovitz has offered the following notions: if the USSR had wanted to attack the West by means of biological war without risk of counterattack, it could not have invented a better means than AIDS. Homosexuals, as the main risk group necessary for the attack, have two advantages.

- A complete cover, distracting attention from the real cause of the disease. If the disease is attributed to a group already suffering from social stigma, people don't search for other causes.

- A good starting point for the disease, because of the high percentage of homosexuals in the West.

According to Horovitz, the great "advantage" of AIDS is that it requires physical contact in order to transmit the disease, thus guaranteeing that the population of the USSR won't be affected, since the Soviet Union is "closed" and has little contact with the West. And even if the disease were to strike some people in the USSR, the authorities would have no problem in eliminating those victims and thus putting a stop to the disease's spread. And anyway, if Soviet laboratories did engender this monstrous virus, we must assume they would also have engendered an antidote.

What about suggestions that AIDS stems from Haitians or from a certain kind of monkey in Zaire? asks Horovitz. He answers that Soviet intelligence would have no difficulty in establishing disinformational trails to Zaire and Haiti, thus distracting attention from the USSR.

Horovitz then takes the final step in this paranoid analysis so typical of the "disinformation" school headed by *Washington Times* editor Arnaud de Borchgrave and *New York Times* freelancer Claire Sterling. Even if AIDS has not originated from the USSR, then someone in the KGB has noted that no one in the West has accused the Soviet Union of spreading AIDS. This means that even if they have not spread diseases in the West thus far, they may well do so in the future. That is, "the fact that Soviets are innocent proves that they are guilty." Horovitz concludes that it is

fitting that the Soviet Union is conducting talks on disarmament and the reduction of international tensions, since the real war, in the form of a biological attack on the West, has already begun.

A week later a well-known Israeli satirist called Dan Ben Amotz responded to Horovitz in his column in *Hadashot*, another Israeli newspaper. He said he'd interviewed Horovitz and described their encounter. "It is all very good, I said. But let's assume other speculative theories. For example, why wouldn't the spread of AIDS be the work of German scientists, inventing the virus on the order of PLO leader Jibril or Hafiz al Assad, the Syrian president. I am sure they can find Shi'ites prepared for suicide who would volunteer to be infected by the disease in order to infect CIA agents who are in close contact with the Mossad. Mr. Horovitz smiled uncomfortably.

"Why, I asked, isn't it possible that those were the Elders of Zion who invented the virus in order to get control of world banking, or maybe the ultra religious Jews who are spreading the disease among the secular Jews so that they would see what happened to those who do not follow Jewish religious law. In the same way, I told Mr. Horovitz, it is not impossible that you are a CIA agent with the mission of spreading this demonic theory about the USSR. Mr. Horovitz laughed, but I think I have heard such a laugh coming out of the mouth of a CIA agent accused of spying for the Russians."

Mr. Horovitz's theories are self-evidently absurd, but they don't differ substantially from lunatic theories about Soviet malevolence that supposedly responsible networks have been retailing with gusto throughout the years of the Reagan presidency. It was ABC who seized upon the accusation, leveled by the State Department and published by the *Wall Street Journal*, that the Soviets, with the assistance of the Vietnamese, were trying to wipe out the Hmong tribespeople of northern Laos with "yellow rain," a mycotoxin that all scientists agreed would

be a spectacularly expensive and inefficient way of trying to eliminate anyone. Why the Soviets or the Vietnamese would have wanted to wipe out the Hmong always remained unclear.

Eventually it transpired that "yellow rain" was bee shit. But by that time the damage was long done. The ABC crew had left the field of battle, having done their bit to convince a slice of the American people that the Russians were poisoners, not to be trusted in any arms agreement. (Had they in fact been waging chemical or biological warfare, the Soviets would have been in breach of treaties they had signed—which was the fundamental point of the State Department campaign.) No retraction from ABC was ever forthcoming.

The cumulative effect of these endlessly reiterated fantasies on the media is a kind of metastasizing credulity, with the media, by sheer force of habit, acquiring the disposition to believe what they are told, however preposterous the story may be. Thus, Nicaraguan attempts to deepen to 35 feet the harbor at El Bluff, on the Atlantic coast, the better to be able to unload freighters bringing supplies, are touted here as a scheme to build a "deep water port" in which Soviet submarines will soon be nestled. The next thing you know, after the anchorpeople have sounded the alarm on the deepwater port for a couple of evenings, Reagan will be using it as cause for invasion. Those who don't believe this should study the history of the famous "lengthened runway" in pre-counterrevolutionary Grenada. Only after the U.S. invasion was it conceded that the runway really was only for tourist traffic after all.

Beastly Bill

Shocking as it seems, the name of Bill Bradley, U.S. senator from New Jersey, is being touted as a Democratic presidential hopeful. We are entering the dismal period when these "hopefuls" will increasingly engage the attention of newspaper and TV pundits. Bradley is one of the dreariest and most reactionary Northern Democrats on Capitol Hill, which is saying a good deal. The pundits love him, just as they love any presidential aspirant who has taken the prudent course of not being black and blessed with the name of Jesse Jackson.

Rock & Roll Confidential reports that, great as the final Amnesty concert was, it was "severely marred" by the appearance of Bradley, "who is desperately attempting to portray himself as the Senator from Rock & Roll." Bradley made a brief speech just after the Hooters' set: "One-third of the world's governments torture their citizens. I think that a government that kills or tortures its own people is a country with a great sickness. We're here today to heal that sickness. We will never give up. We will never stop until that sickness is cured, until the world is rid of terror and torture."

As *Rock & Roll Confidential* remarked, "This was not your ordinary display of political opportunism. Bradley came to Giants Stadium fresh from Washington where his most significant activity this term was voting yes on aid to the Central American *contras*. The *contras* are, of course, among the leading torturers in this hemisphere." A previous attempt by Bradley to court the rock & roll vote was marred by his comparison, on national television, of Bruce Springsteen to "Buddy Holiday."

Bradley also did nothing about attempts by the blue noses to introduce censorship on record albums. These attempts have now been boosted by the decision of Wal-Mart—a huge discount chain in the South—to stop selling *Rolling Stone*, *Spin* and kindred publications. A few days earlier Jimmy Swaggart had denounced rock and purveyors of rock materials as the work of Satan.

Peter Hannan

LIFE IN THE U.S.

THE WORKPLACE

Working out the kinks in Flint

By Lori Erickson

ON ANY GIVEN WEDNESDAY in downtown Flint, Mich., an unlikely combination of people gather for conversation over a simple meal of soup, cheese and bread: management executives from General Motors, auto workers, university professors, local union officials, clergy and anyone else who may be attracted by a modest sign on the door that reads "Center for New Work."

The man in the kitchen stirring the soup is Frithjof Bergmann, University of Michigan philosophy professor and one of a group of organizers who believe that Flint is the perfect place to put into practice some of their revolutionary ideas about work. In Flint, philosophy is meeting reality—and the results may radically change the workplace in America.

For the past four years Bergmann and his colleagues have been spreading a simple message: Flint is on the front line of what will soon be happening in the rest of the country. They believe that the U.S. is facing profound changes in its workforce, and that the impact of automating technologies will be much swifter and broader than many experts are willing to believe. Already the trends are being felt in some parts of the economy, as farmers, office workers and even white-collar executives are beginning to realize.

Perhaps nowhere are the changes as drastic and painful as in the Michigan auto industry. The situation is dreadfully familiar: unemployment rates exceeding 30 percent, with thousands more jobs lost every year; a huge exodus of workers from the area and a dramatic lowering of living standards for many of those who remain. An entire region of the country is being devastated.

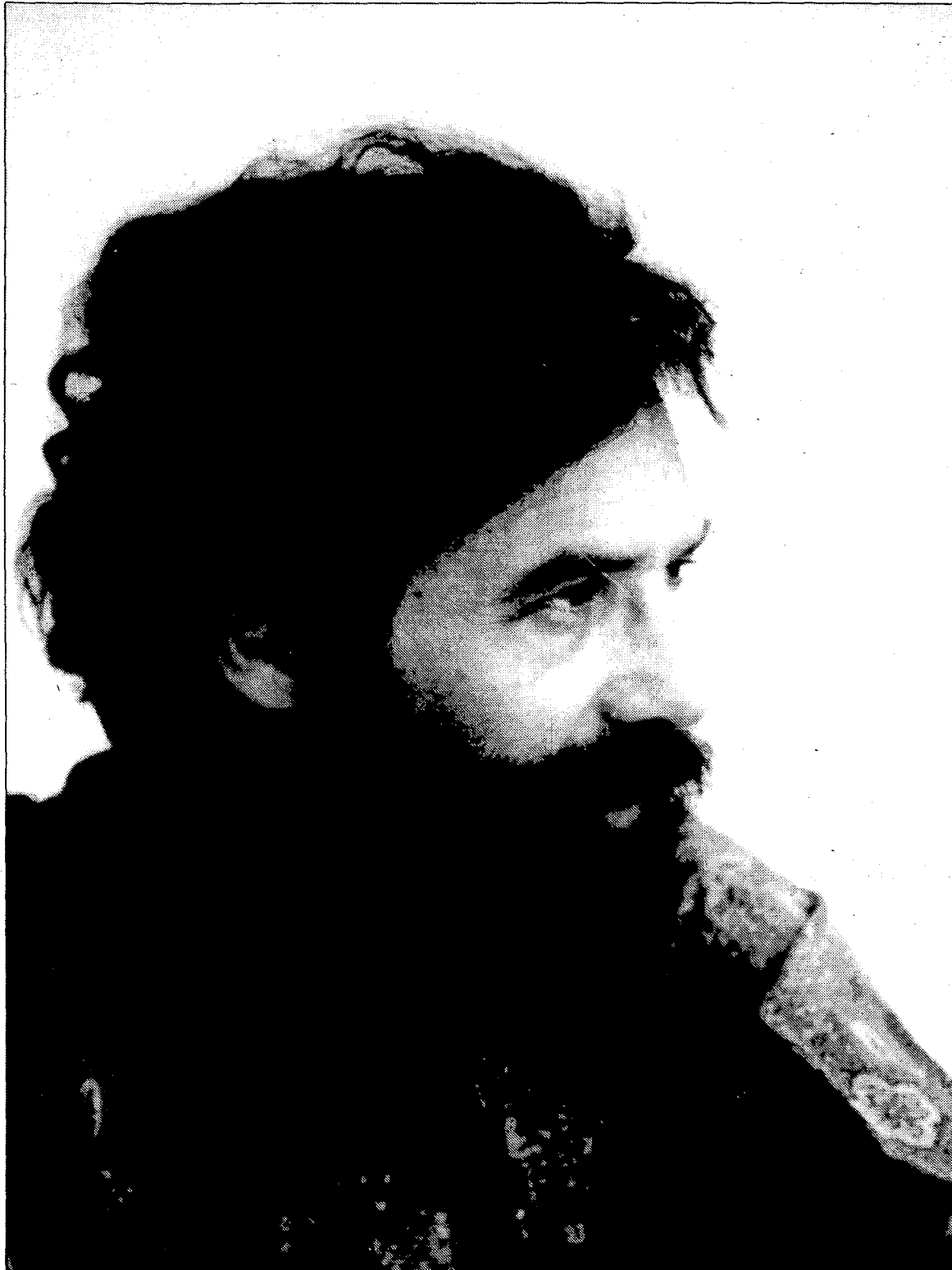
Innovative solutions to grim problems

"Perhaps the best indication of just how desperate the situation is," says Bergmann, "is the fact that people are willing to listen to a philosopher."

What Bergmann is telling the increasing numbers of people willing to listen to him is that good things may come out of the present grim situation. "What we see in Flint is the rapid reduction of boring and repetitive work," he says. "Automation technology doesn't have to be something we fear. If we're creative it can enrich the value of everyone's life."

Bergmann is far from being a starry-eyed idealist. His ideas about work are the product of many years of study and research. He has spent hundreds of hours talking to people on both sides of the employment dilemma, from General Motors vice presidents to auto workers who have been unemployed for years.

Bergmann believes that in the



Photographer unknown

Workplace philosopher Frithjof Bergmann advocates a share-the-work program in Flint, Mich.

future there will be an increasing shortage of jobs, and if the U.S. hopes to avoid widespread disaster it must find a way to share those jobs instead of allowing just a few full-time employment. In Flint, for example, the unemployment rate stands at 30 percent, while another 30 percent of the workers regularly work 60-70 hours each week.

Bergmann believes that workers can turn what many see as a disaster—the threat of no jobs—into a liberating opportunity. By altering the structure of work, productivity could be increased and jobs provided for many who would otherwise be unemployed.

Much of Bergmann's message concerns ways employers could restructure work time. The central example he uses is of a worker who would have a job for six months and then have six months off. The extended open period would allow the worker to pursue any number of goals, from starting a small business to retraining for another career.

The six-months-on/six-months-off pattern is only one example of what could be done. It is a symbol

of a much greater flexibility in the workplace, an increased concern for the well-being of workers and a partial solution to the growing problem of unemployment. It also could mean substantial benefits to employers, including increased productivity, better morale, reduced absenteeism and the ability to adjust personnel equitably during high and low work seasons.

Laying the groundwork

Bergmann's involvement in Flint began five years ago, soon after he produced a television series in Ann Arbor entitled "Culture After the Elimination of Labor." The series led to a great deal of interest in the area, and Bergmann was challenged to put some of his ideas into practice. After briefly considering Detroit as the center of his efforts, Flint was chosen instead.

"You can only do something significant if the entire community is involved, and that could never happen in a city as large and factionalized as Detroit," says Bergmann. "A union, no matter how committed, is not enough. Flint has a sense of its own identity and in its own way thinks of itself

as a community."

It was that feeling of community that Bergmann attempted to tap. He soon gained the assistance of UM-Flint professor Richard Gull, Mike Westfall and Kathy Smith of the United Auto Workers (UAW), Paul Newman and Dr. Robin Widgery of General Motors and Father James Bettendorf of the Flint Newman Center. Through hundreds of speeches and meetings in the Flint area they spoke of possible solutions to the problems of unemployment and the displacement of thousands of auto workers.

The turning point in their efforts came in November 1984, when a meeting was held in the regional offices of the UAW union leaders gave Bergmann's work their endorsement, and not long after that the Center for New Work was established in downtown Flint, with money raised from the state university, UAW, Michigan Department of Commerce and various other organizations.

The recognition has been slow in coming, but Bergmann's ideas are attracting increasing notice throughout the state and the nation. Bergmann's efforts have

gained credibility in the past year as people see that many of the things he's been predicting have come to pass. Other industries besides manufacturing are beginning to feel the effects of automating technologies, and it is not only Flint residents who fear for their jobs' future.

One of Bergmann's strongest supporters is Stan Marshall, the regional director of the UAW in Flint. "Maybe Bergmann's ideas are radical," he says, "but the times are bad enough that we have to do revolutionary things."

Support from other sources

The most powerful supporter of Bergmann's efforts, however, may turn out to be General Motors. Few people are aware of the existence of a \$100 million fund that has been designated as "venture capital" for auto workers displaced by changing technologies. Negotiated in a contract years ago, the money has been left virtually untouched.

An even larger pool of money is also gathering dust—and interest. This fund belongs equally to the UAW and General Motors, who both exercise discretionary power over it. Every union member who works an hour contributes a dime to the fund, with the money to be used for retraining workers. Union members have voted to release money to the Center for New Work, but General Motors has yet to grant its approval.

The machinery is seemingly in place for such work-scheduling experiments—all that is needed is a power source. The latest national contract negotiated between the UAW and General Motors contains a provision that encourages "alternative work scheduling arrangements." Bergmann believes that a six-months-on/six-months-off pilot program could be established as early as this fall if a local union would agree to sponsor it.

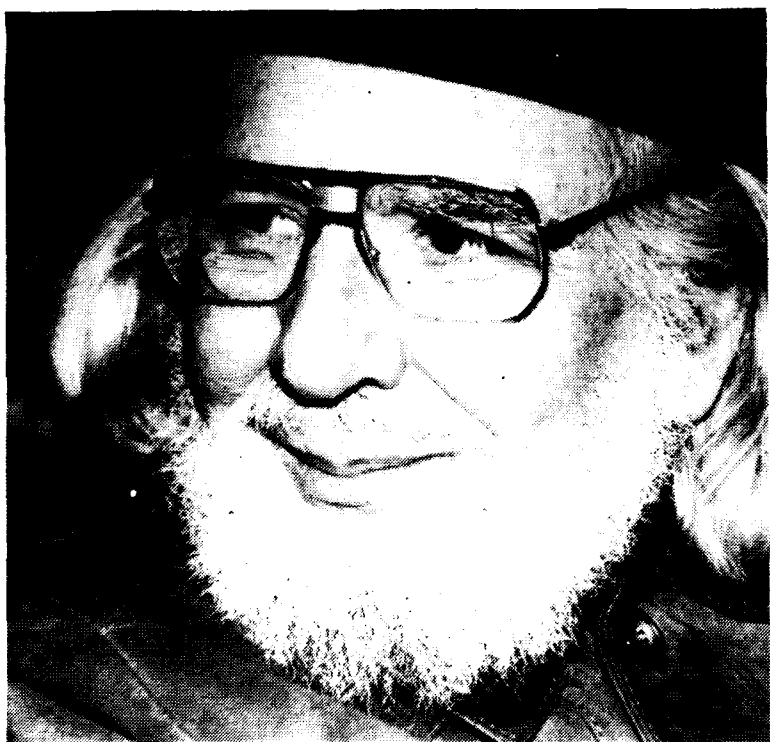
"All that it would take at this point," says Bergmann, "is a local that would stand up and say they want to do what we've been talking about for so long. There are enough workers interested in working half-time to make it go."

Frithjof Bergmann has gone from being a kind of village eccentric to a well-known figure in Flint, controversial but with a growing following. The Center for New Work has developed into a meeting place for both workers and management, a neutral location to meet and discuss mutual concerns and strategies. Bergmann realizes that if his ideas are to succeed they must have the support of everyone in the community, including the employers.

Other programs sponsored by the Center include a weekly radio show on WFBE in Flint and an almost-completed 10-part videotape series. A major boon came a few months ago when the Michigan superintendent of schools agreed to have the videotape series distributed to every school in Michigan. In Flint itself the series will be virtually required for all high school students.

"Both management and the workers realize that something has to change," says Bergmann. "They don't know how, but the desperation is there. The problem we're facing now is in a sense ridiculous: our greatest shortage is of slow, mechanical, hard labor. We need to take advantage of that technology instead of fight it."

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Lori Erickson is a freelance journalist based in Iowa City.



Nicaragua's Minister of Culture Ernesto Cardenal

NICARAGUA

Sometimes, the pen's the sword

Culture and Politics in Nicaragua: Testimonies of Poets and Writers

By Steven White

Lumen Books (446 W. 20th St., New York, NY 10011), 134 pp., \$8.95

By Gene H. Bell-Villada

POETS HAVE ALWAYS ENJOYED high esteem in Nicaragua. The prolific Rubén Darío transformed Spanish verse idiom around 1900, and is now a Nicaraguan national hero along with Sandino. Poet Rigoberto López is today warmly remembered for having gunned down dictator Somoza I in 1956. And Ernesto Cardenal—liberation theologian, Jesuit friend of Thomas Merton and Sandinista minister of culture—is widely known for his tactile, down-to-earth poems.

This little volume of encounters with Nicaraguan writers by Steven White (a young American translator and poet) gets beyond daily headlines about ideological feuds and *contra* raids and helps bring alive for U.S. readers the cultural ferment in that embattled nation. White's translations of these spirited conversations and the interspersed samples of poetry is idiomatic, lively and smooth.

Ages of these dozen or so literati range from an eloquent 80-year-old avant-gardist to veteran women poet-activists in their 30s (one of them Daniel Ortega's wife). Several were jailed by Somoza, others were his supporters, and some were both. Despite their passionate search for indigenous roots and an agreed-upon objective of putting U.S. cultural molds behind them, they remain cosmopolitan in tastes, citing literary debts to Baudelaire, Rilke and particularly to Whitman, Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams and the Beats.

Given their country's harsh history, the absence of pure aesthetes or art-for-art's-sake cultists in this group comes as no surprise, though some of the writers can be quite complex and esoteric in their verse. Their artistic tolerance bears

Given their country's harsh history, the absence of pure aesthetes or art-for-art's-sake cultists in this new collection comes as no surprise.

noting: no poet is dismissed as poet simply because of his or her politics.

Reading these pages, one can't help but feel moved by how seriously Nicaraguans—poets and otherwise—take poetry. Lyric language seems to be in the very air they breathe, is almost as much a part of everyday culture as pop tunes or anti-imperialism. Since 1979, moreover, poetic production has been broadly democratized. The nation-wide poetry workshops with peasants, workers and soldiers serve as an essential spiritual component in the war against the *contras*. Nicaragua may well be the only country in the world today with a novelist as vice president (Sergio Ramírez, author of *To Bury Our Fathers*). Indeed, as Cardenal jokes in *Cultural Politics in Nicaragua*, no other country on earth actually encourages poetry from its policemen.

Of course, our 36,000 American poets haven't much to envy in the life-and-death situation of Nicaragua's troubadour class. In their suburban-academic solitude, however, many would feel pleased at being paid half the regard any humble Nicaraguan lyricist now gets.

Gene H. Bell-Villada teaches Spanish at Williams College and is author of *Borges and His Fiction*.

JAPAN
The literature of survival

Fire from the Ashes

Edited by Kenzaburo Ōe
Readers International, 204 pp., \$7.95

By Darcy DeMarco

THE SEARCH FOR HOPE AND dignity in the ruins of war is the theme of *Fire from the Ashes*, a powerful anthology of short stories about Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Written by established authors and ordinary citizens who experienced the August 1945 bombings, the stories graphically describe the searing of bodies and psyches that left scars on the survivors long after the cities had been rebuilt.

Reality takes on a new and disturbing meaning as the ordinary men and women in the tales struggle to reassemble their lives, slowly realizing that their most intimate customs and habits have been irrevocably changed by the blasts. The future, once a beacon of hope, is now obscured by the specter of the mushroom cloud, leaving many to ponder the merit of continued existence in a world where a single flash can end 500,000 lives.

The agony of the characters often reflects the suffering of their creator, as in Tamiki Hara's "Summer Flower." Hara was in Hiroshima visiting his wife's grave when the bomb was dropped, and later became one of the most determined publishers of A-bomb related works. Immediately following the attack, character "N" searches in vain for his wife; for three days and nights he examines piles of charred corpses and disfigured survivors. At last he returns to the school where she was teaching; her ashes may be somewhere among the remains of the students. But peace is elusive for both N and Hara; N will never know where his wife died, and Hara committed suicide when the U.S. was rumored to be considering using atomic weapons against Korea in 1951.



Order and disorder, peaceful beauty and wanton destruction are contrasted in "Summer Flower" and Masjui Ibuse's "The Crazy Iris." Hara's tiny-petaled flowers represent the tranquility of the days before the attack; Ibuse's iris, blooming out of season with hard, crinkled petals, the disharmony afterwards. This sense of aberration in nature appears in every story; the women who suffers numerous miscarriages and bleed incessantly in Mitsuhiro Inoue's "The House of Hands" are but the human interpretation of the warped iris.

That the physical alterations lead to changed social relationships is one of the tragic aspects of these stories, which depict reactions ranging from the spurning of entire villages of women by marriageable males to overt discrimination by Japanese society against the survivors. With their grossly distorted faces, limbs covered with plastic-like skin and backs filled with glass fragments, the survivors are an unsightly reminder of conflict and defeat in a society that values beauty, harmony and success—or at least the appear-

ance of them.

An overwhelming feeling of loss and helplessness permeates the book, rendering absurd the concept of the winnability of nuclear war. Schoolteachers, maids, factory workers, housewives wander aimlessly through the rubble, too stunned to respond to the cries of the dying who surround them. One father stares vacantly at the disfigured corpse of his son; burial rituals are forgotten by a mind too steeped in horror, and the young man is left where he was found. Even after reconstruction, the wandering continues as the survivors gaze at a flower or a painting, trying to make sense of their world.

Fire from the Ashes searches for hope, but falls short in the attempt, as it must as long as the nuclear threat continues. Until the specter of the mushroom cloud no longer remains, the suffering of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will have been in vain, and the stories will continue to be a chronicle of despair in the knowledge that it can, indeed, happen again.

Darcy DeMarco is a freelance writer based in San Diego, Calif.

YELLOWSTONE

In the wreckage of our recreation

Playing God in Yellowstone: The Destruction of America's First National Park

By Alton Chase

Atlantic Monthly Press, 446 pp., \$24.95

Alton Chase's exposé of the mismanagement of our oldest and most famous national park makes for unsettling reading. "As a wildlife refuge, Yellowstone is dying," he writes.

He asserts that park service attempts to "play God" are in large part to blame. Past efforts to protect "valuable" animals like elk and antelope from "vermin" resulted in the deaths of hundreds of

wolves, mountain lions and coyotes at the hands of park personnel. The wolf was probably exterminated in the park by 1926.

The elk, meanwhile, thrived, though it is unclear whether that animal was really native to the park. The herds, with no natural predators, have overpopulated the park, driving out other animals and destroying the range.

But Chase also blames simplistic ecology for believing that the park's problems will go away if we just leave it alone. This has led, for example, to the closing of garbage dumps on which bears are dependent. When park officials wanted to reduce the elk herd

through controlled hunting, the outcry from "nature lovers" was so intense they had to stop. (It's easier to feel sorry for Bambi than for the habitat she destroys.)

But there has been no "natural" ecosystem in the park since the extinction of the mammoth, as Native American hunting and burning played a major role in the region's environment. Furthermore, the park has been altered too far to get better on its own. Some sort of "affirmative action" ecology is necessary.

Since Chase's book was published, the park service has recognized some of the problems he points out and has begun an attempt to reestablish wolves in Yellowstone. Playing God? Perhaps. But for Chase, once humans have become part of an ecosystem, to do nothing is also to play God—and with potentially disastrous results.

—Jim Naureckas

ART «» ENTERTAINMENT



Muralists Iri and Toshi Maruki, whose subject matter is mass atrocity, are profiled in *Hellfire: A Journey from Hiroshima*.

THE BOMB

Transcending Hiroshima day's legacy of shame

By Pat Aufderheide

THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE Hiroshima bombing on August 6 is always an ambiguous event. The media coverage seems to work as a momentary prod to public guilt, in a vacuum of public policy: the host of documentaries now available chronicling the event and its aftermath; the stories of survivors told in print and visual arts; the acts of memorialization dutifully reported on inside pages of elite dailies. This year a couple of documentaries attempt to put Hiroshima and Nagasaki back on the historical and cultural map.

The PBS special *Remembering the Bomb*, airing on most public TV stations August 6, puts at the center of its you-are-there coverage of the 1985 memorials at Hiroshima and Nagasaki the long forbidden questions: is this anniversary significant? And if not, why not?

The hour-long special, directed by Steve York, features four participants in the events: Jacob Beser, who detonated the bomb over Hiroshima; Gordon Arneson, who served on the secret committee advising Truman on the bomb; Michiko Yamaoka, one of the "Hiroshima maidens" who in 1955 came to the U.S. for reconstructive surgery for her bomb scars; and Yoshitaka Kawamoto, who as a schoolchild survived near-ground-zero impact and now heads the

Peace Memorial Museum in Japan. We travel with them to the demonstrations, protests and events surrounding the 1985 atomic anniversary in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Invisible survivors

The film resolutely juxtaposes two realities: one, the history-changing power of the bomb; the other, the irrelevance of the anniversary in Japanese life and in international politics.

American kids on bicycles, European delegations, Japanese peace groups on pilgrimages attend the events. But many others, we see, do not. Throngs of Japanese shopping for consumer durables downtown, just a tiny part of the great majority of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki residents who never attend the ceremonies. We learn that no American official has ever attended the ceremonies.

We learn through the Japanese survivors, or *hibakusha*, that most of them prefer anonymity, in part because of the stigma they suffer in Japanese society. Yamaoka, for instance, has never before attended a memorial ceremony. Other survivors testify to lifelong discrimination and shame from a Japanese public that has put them and the bomb out of sight and mind. Seeing Japanese disarmament activists expiate their guilt in front of some nonplussed *hibakusha* tells you something about why many survivors avoid

publicity. It also illustrates the narrator's comment that the Japanese left has been factionalized and ineffectual through the years on atomic disarmament issues.

The Americans coolly explain their part in the bombing. Beser quietly denies he feels any guilt, though he says he'd prefer to be in the sky than try to kill an enemy face to face: "It was an act of war," he says. And Arneson compares the decision to bomb to other options, which seemed far more cruel and less effective. Clips from Frank Capra's war propaganda films and from newsreels of *kamikaze* pilots remind you of the cultural and political framework of the moment.

The Americans' comments don't justify the bombings. They do suggest that any future wartime choices will be made under conditions at least as harshly conditioned, and as little influenced by regrets for past choices.

Remembering the Bomb strikes a delicate balance between honoring the solemnity of the event (and the gravity of the issues behind it) and posing hard questions about the meaning of this anniversary. Its you-are-there quality puts the burden on viewers to ask what the public—in Japan, Europe or the U.S.—can and should be doing to build a future that can remember horror without repeating it.

Atrocity and art

Hellfire: A Journey from Hiroshima spends an hour with two Japanese artists who have spent their professional lives developing answers to that question. The documentary will be shown on Wisconsin public TV stations August 6 before its fall theatrical release (and later national TV release next year). The program profiles Iri and Toshi Maruki, muralists who have become internationally famous for their starkly elegant wall hangings of the most difficult subject for art: mass atrocity.

The documentary was produced by journalist John Junkerman and historian John Dower with funds

from the Wisconsin Humanities Commission. Dower's book *War without Mercy*, just published by Pantheon, describes the cultural context of wartime politics; and the Japanese publishing house Kodansha issued an impressive book, *The Hiroshima Murals*, in conjunction with the film.

Junkerman faced the inevitable problems in making the film: "I would say I was making a film on Hiroshima and the conversation would die," he says. The artists faced a similar problem. The film concerns their coming to terms not only with public avoidance but the absence of a visual language for marking events in the history of our time.

"It's about paradoxes," Junker-

Remembering the Bomb strikes the delicate balance between honoring the anniversary and questioning its meaning.

man says. The central paradox is that the Marukis have chosen, in their art, to live both with and in contradistinction to the bomb. In their peaceful garden-studio-home-museum complex, they work together—not easily, as we see by watching them develop a mural—to produce gigantic murals featuring the human experience of devastation and chaos.

The goal is not to memorialize, with its implication of sanctifying piety. Instead, the murals recreate a vivid sense of living and dying human experience. They show you people who might have names you know, participants in a moment that has a grim fascination.

For the Marukis, as we learn from understated interviews, the Hiroshima murals were the beginning of a lifelong challenge to give an aesthetic name and face to 20th-century history. It was the very experience of painting suffering—and listening to public reaction—that freed them from the paralyzing cycle of guilt, blame and impotence.

The Marukis began to explore beyond the bounds of anti-American hatred, into questions of mass suffering that challenged the Jap-

By Reebee Garofalo

FOR FIVE WEEKS THIS SUMMER, I traveled through Europe on a research and lecture tour on popular music, sponsored by members of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music—a network of popular music researchers from 30 countries. Nearly everywhere I went, I was struck by the connection between political movements and popular music.

A June SOS Racism festival drew a crowd of 200,000. Less than two years old, SOS Racism is an impressive organization with more than 300 Stop Racism Committees operating in France alone. Their "little hand" badge with the slogan, "Touche pas à mon pote" (hands off my buddy), has become internationally recognized (see *In These Times*, Dec. 11, 1985).

The concert featured some 30 performers ranging from humorist Guy Bedos and French pop singers like Michel Berger and Alain Souchon to more internationally known rockers like Bronski Beat and reggae-oriented UB-40. From 8:00 p.m. until midnight, the event was telecast live to France

and was available throughout Western Europe via Eurovision satellite. The concert was also telecast to the live audience in attendance on a rear-projected television screen that measured about 35 feet by 40 feet and could be viewed like a living room television set from three blocks away.

The dawn of anti-racist rock movements was, of course, Britain's Rock Against Racism, organized by the Socialist Workers Party in the mid-'70s. The history of the movement has recently been documented in a book by party member David Widgery called *Beating Time: Riots 'n' Race 'n' Rock 'n' Roll*.

The current rock/politics connection in Britain is in the hands of the Labour Party. It's called the "Red Wedge." Music-related organizers such as Pete Jenner and ex-*New Musical Express* editor Neil Spencer have put together a collective of entertainers who are committed to performing a series of benefits for the Labour Party.

The appearance of Red Wedge coincides with a widely felt need to defeat the conservative Thatcher government in the next election and the equally widespread feeling

anese political structure as well. They painted murals about Japanese war atrocities; showing American POWs in Japanese camps; Japanese mass murder in Okinawa. They went to Poland, to design their mural about Auschwitz. They painted the Minamata victims poisoned with mercury.

Official disfavor (their paintings are regarded by the Japanese government as unsuitable for children) and lack of large foundation support hasn't stopped their work from gaining international renown. And in Japan, their private museum gets 50,000 visitors a year. In the film, Toshi Maruki says it's because "people are still human, no matter how brutalized they may be. We do paint dark, cruel, painful scenes. But the question is, how should we portray the people who face such realities? We want to paint them beautifully."

It is often said that political art is to art as military music is to music. You get the impression from this film that the Marukis would agree. They're looking for a way to transcend that category, to make an art appropriate to the era of Auschwitz and Hiroshima and the Rape of Nanking. And so it makes sense that the film is as much about the process of making art as it is the subject matter of it. Iri Maruki's individualistic, abstract taste, drawing from the traditions of Japanese ink and brush work, does battle with Toshi Maruki's naturalistic, Western-derived style.

After a lifetime of painting together, they still paint in conflict up to the final mounting of a mural. And out of the wall, in the end, emerges a product both international and distinctively Japanese, proof that people can participate in their own history.

©Pat Aufderheide

For more information on Hellfire, contact First Run Features, 153 Waverly Pl., New York, NY 10014, (212) 243-0600.

BRITAIN

In praise of a tape sales tax

By Simon Frith

IT WAS ANNOUNCED ON THE DAY U.S. planes bombed Libya so no one took much notice. Margaret Thatcher's government will introduce a sales tax on blank audio tapes. The details of the scheme are still to be spelled out, but the levy is just one aspect of a general updating of copyright and patent laws. It is sure to be approved by Parliament.

I've always been against a levy, if only because of the rhetoric of its sponsors. "Save Our Music! Support Musicians!" actually means "Protect Profits!" and the substitution argument—a record taped is a record sale lost—is nonsense even according to the industry's own research. The rise of home-taping is just part of a reorganization of leisure time and, in practice, the most assiduous tapers are also the biggest fans—they buy the most records, too. I'm quite sure that home-taping has helped keep the record industry healthy—a record untaped is, more often than not, a record unwanted. And, anyway, I share the left-wing fantasy that the crack-up of the copyright system means the crack-up of capitalism. The relentless process in which everything became "property" has at last hit a snag: property rights can no longer be guaranteed. Watch the leisure corporations come tumbling down!

But this, of course, is a fantasy. The strength of capitalism is precisely its ability to adapt to technological change, to cut its losses (and workforce) in one sector as new possibilities for profit emerge in another. Already the

major record companies are shifting their attention from the manufacture/distribution/sales of records to the creation/licensing/exploitation of rights. A recording star like Michael Jackson makes most of his income these days from other media—TV, cinema, advertising, merchandise. And consider the major labels' new line on pop videos. They're no longer provided free—as ads to sell records—they're to be licensed, a source of profit (and entertainment) in their own right.

There is in Britain now, I'm glad to say, a Labour Party subcommittee on popular culture, where these issues were discussed by industry insiders so persuasively that I'm now in favor of a levy—not as a source of further profit for the big companies, but as a means of protection for the small ones. I'm convinced in the name of equity, too. The problem is not lost sales but unrewarded services—even I was outraged when a professor cheerily told me that she'd photocopied an entire copy of my book and distributed the mimeograph to students to copy for themselves.

The real political issue here is not whether a tax on tape should be raised, but what should happen to the resulting revenue. In the conditions of perfect fairness it would

be distributed to those musicians whose work was being used; in practice, no one knows who they are, and the industry argues that as people probably tape the records that are otherwise most popular (according to sales figures and radio plays), so the levy fund could be distributed alongside (and to the same people) as performing rights earnings.

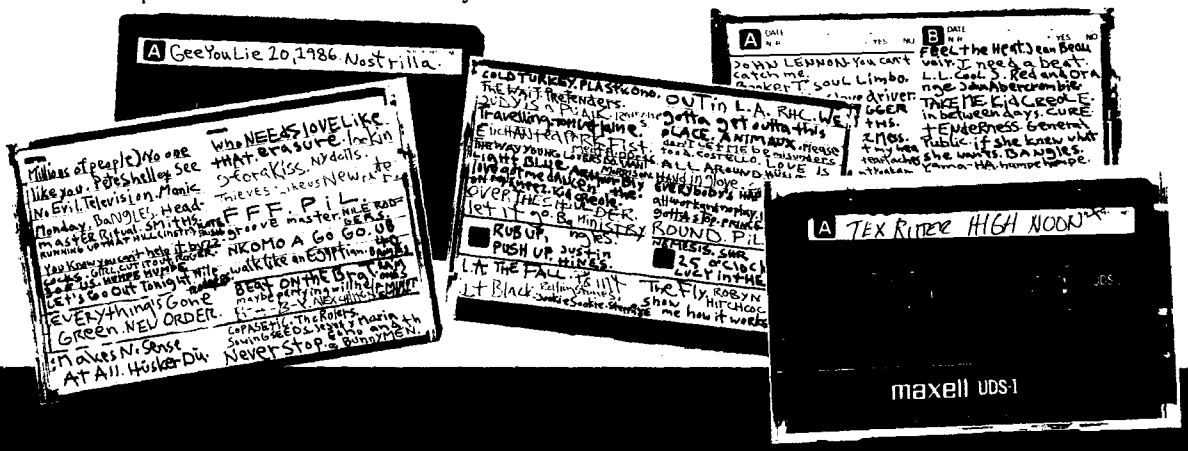
This is a self-serving argument and rests on dubious assumptions about both home-taping and the fairness of existing royalty collection schemes, which systematically penalize the independent sector and "minority" musics. The Labour argument is, rather, that the levy fund offers us an opportunity to challenge normal industry practices, and an increasing number of European countries are developing their levy policies from the premise that its purpose is to support local music and local music-makers, to buck the logic of the multinationals. The levy is a state fund; it should be under political, not corporate, control.

This is not the Thatcher line, and not all Red Wedge supporters are convinced by it (they cling on to the populist position—what about the poor pop consumer?) but whatever the immediate results the levy debate addresses issues of cul-

tural politics that will recur. For a start, in Europe as elsewhere anti-Americanism is becoming a matter of common sense. This is partly the Reagan effect (most Brits assume that World War III will be started by the U.S.), partly the Dallas effect (as the grip of global leisure companies tightens, so we are swamped with American entertainment), but we've long lived with Hollywood, etc., and I think something new is going on—a change in the value of "America" as myth. What "the land of opportunity" stands for now (thanks in part to relentless Thatcherite propaganda) is freedom for capital.

Deep in my subconscious (and unlike any American I've ever met), I trust state regulation over market forces. I'm going to support the levy—as a means of state intervention. And I'm going to oppose the Tories' latest "privatization" scheme—the sale of BBC Radio 1 to commercial interests. This could be Red Wedge's most important role—not to rally young voters, but to politicize issues (like the levy) that are presently posed just as questions of economic logic. Copyright agreements, don't forget, concern power as well as money, the power of private interests to limit "fair use" of public culture. The blank tape levy doesn't end the arguments, it just begins them.

Simon Frith teaches sociology at the University of Warwick and is the author of *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure and the Politics of Rock'n'Roll*.



EURO-POP

Continental rockin' on the political beat

that the Labour Party is the only body that can do it. "For the Labour Party," says rock critic and Labour Party activist Simon Frith, "Red Wedge is just an electoral weapon" (see story above). But the musicians involved believe they are changing the Labour Party and developing a cultural politics. To an outsider, it is not yet clear who's zoomin' who.

I'll take Sweden

The top musicians in Sweden have released an LP called "Rock Against Apartheid." The Swedish rock/politics connection has been played out even more dramatically at the level of community politics and everyday life by social workers and amateur musicians.

Six years ago, a young social worker named Ove Sernhede started working with street kids in Gothenburg. Sernhede, also a musician, soon discovered that

one thing the kids had in common was that they all liked music—"mostly hard rock and punk." He invited about 25 members of the gang to a rehearsal of his band. Soon they were taking music lessons twice a week. Within a year the gang had become three rock bands.

Following a successful tour of the 40-50 youth clubs around Gothenburg, the bands became popular locally. "So they started writing their own songs," said Sernhede, "about their own lives, their own situation—troubles with the police or with the school or what it's like to live in a suburb where many of the kids were taking drugs."

The project, dubbed "Let a Thousand Stones Roll" by Sernhede, really caught fire. At its height 50 part-time instructors were making the rounds to more than a dozen rehearsal spaces to

teach music to some 500 participants who formed more than 150 rock bands.

Now teenage participants no longer identify themselves as members of Let a Thousand Stones Roll. "They don't want to be associated with something started by social workers," explained Sernhede. Sernhede and the kids continue to be linked by their mutual association with the center piece of the project, the House of Music.

The House of Music was an old school in downtown Gothenburg that was converted to a cultural center and performance venue. In addition to a coffee house, an auditorium and numerous rehearsal spaces, it houses a youth culture magazine called *Oken* (the Desert), and is the site of various recording and performance projects for amateur bands. More importantly, all these activities are run by young people; there is one administrator who is a social worker.

Rockin' East Germany

East Germany has embraced rock music to an even greater degree. There is, for example, a Rock for Peace festival in East Berlin every year that features 50 bands and an

audience of 15,000 people. They could easily sell five times that number of tickets, I was told, but the state purposely limits the size of the audience so the festival won't become too crowded.

The East Germans have taken a more enlightened view of rock than other Eastern bloc countries such as Poland and the Soviet Union, where rock musicians are treated warily by the state (except when it comes time to raise funds for the victims of Chernobyl). East Germany gets a steady diet of Anglo-American top 40 from the Armed Forces Radio Network in West Berlin, and the Communist Party has decided that it would be far more productive to participate in it than to oppose it.

The music I heard was Western-influenced, ranging from cover versions of Anglo-American top 40 to derivative blues and heavy metal—all played quite well and interpreted with feeling. But this music, clearly a music of the body, was consumed as a music of the head. The German audience remained motionless—even in venues with huge dance floors. It reminded me of a late-'60s psychedelic audience, but no one

in East Germany uses drugs (unless you count alcohol, cigarettes and coffee, all of which are consumed in abundance).

Musicians' salaries in East Germany are paid by the state according to a rating system tied to musical proficiency. Equipment is purchased and owned privately by each group and East German bands are without doubt the best equipped bands I've seen anywhere in the world. Even amateur bands playing in local clubs traveled with a complete sound reinforcement system and their own lighting grid, with operating technicians as integral members of the band. Guitarists inevitably played classic Western rock guitars—Gibson SGs, Fender Stratocasters. Invariably, the musicians imagined that Western bands must be better equipped than they were.

To me the isolation of East Germany was understandable, if tragic. Our own is not. A thousand stones are rolling in Europe. We should be hearing more about it.

Reebee Garofalo teaches in the Center for Human Services at the University of Massachusetts at Boston.

Democrats

Continued from page 3

Lewan's definition of "dead center" did not reflect an objective assessment of either popular or Democratic opinion; instead, it reflected the view of the CDM members, according to which their views should be balanced off evenly against those of the vast majority of Democrats.

CDM's Rosenblatt was still unhappy with the document. The section on *contra* aid "fudges the issue to some extent," he said. But he applauded Solarz' attempt to reconcile his views with those of others on the committee. "I am satisfied that a sincere effort was made."

Aspin doctrine

The Aspin report, which was supposed to incorporate Solarz' report, was released July 18. In contrast to Solarz' report, which has the status of a working document, Aspin's report became official Democratic Party policy.

The report, however, did not equivocate on the issue of military aid and intervention. It supported these measures as integral to American foreign policy in Central America, Africa and Southeast Asia. In the name of the Democratic Party, the Aspin report represents CDM's undiluted convictions.

"From my particular perspective, I felt it was much better," Rosenblatt said.

It contains laudatory references to Henry Jackson, grouping him with Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Harry Truman. It endorses the MX missile and a "prudent SDI research program." (Compare similar uses of adjectives: a "mild heroin addiction," a "thoughtful maniac.")

Most important, it supports the administration's recourse to military intervention. "When the opponents of liberty are backed by foreign military aid and driven by radical ideologies, negotiations and economic assistance alone are often insufficient," the report states, obviously referring to Nicaragua. The report continues (beware of faltering grammar): "Many political conflicts have a sizeable military dimension often backed by radical forces supported by the Soviet Union, Cuba, and others necessitating that we give economic and military assistance to help authentic democratic resistance movements in Latin America, Africa and Southeast Asia."

Of course, these are minor victories for the CDM. The Democratic National Committee's publications are read by 47 Washington journalists, who are paid to do so, but are usually ignored by the more discerning public. The Coalition for a Democratic Majority's ability to shape the DNC's output is indicative, however, of the astonishing power this small group of people wields within Washington backrooms. Their successful attempt to dominate the DNC's deliberations is a preview of what they will attempt to do when the Democrats nominate a presidential candidate in 1988. ■

Sanctions

Continued from page 10

of foreign currency for the necessary inputs into its new domestic industries."

"Sanctions, by themselves, would sooner or later have forced a political decision," a former employee of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of Rhodesia asserts. "No economy anywhere in the world can exist under a sanctions type situation for a longer period of time.... Sooner or later, something has to give."

The war was "the final nail in the coffin," said one businessman. "But there were a lot of other nails.... The state of economic sanctions could not go on forever without a total collapse."

If Thatcher is mistaken in her assertion that sanctions "didn't work" in Rhodesia, have she and her American counterpart misjudged the case of South Africa?

Like Rhodesia in 1965, South Africa today relies heavily on international trade and investment. Foreign trade constitutes approximately 55 percent of South Africa's gross domestic product, while its foreign debt is equivalent to more than 33 percent of its GDP. Indeed, according to veterans of the sanctions campaign against Rhodesia, South Africa is even more vulnerable.

"Sanctions have the capacity to really

damage the South African economy," believes Cross, now chief executive of the Cold Storage Commission, a Zimbabwe parastatal. And the damage would be even more crippling, he claims, "because South Africa is so much more sophisticated, so much more dependent on access to technology, so much more dependent upon exports of sophisticated products."

The deepening crisis in the South African economy is another factor that will work to the country's disadvantage if sanctions are imposed. While Rhodesia in 1965 had a vigorous economy, with some fat to soften the blows, South Africa is currently facing its worst recession since the Great Depression. Inflation is rampant, interest rates are soaring and black unemployment has reached record heights.

In conjunction with growing resistance from within, Pretoria is extremely vulnerable to pressures from without. For South Africa, as for Rhodesia, comprehensive economic sanctions would be a potent force pushing the country toward majority rule.

—Elizabeth Schmidt
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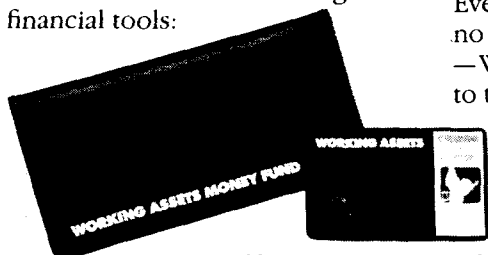
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SLIPPERY ROCK, PA

August 21-24

Sustaining the Campus Left: Strategies for Socialist Students. 1986 Democratic Socialists of American Youth Section Summer Conference. August 21-24, Slippery Rock University. Join Michael Harrington, Barbara Ehrenreich, Irving Howe, Kevin Danaher and others. Plenaries and workshops include: New Frontiers in Feminist Politics, Militarism and Development, South Africa, Central America, the New American Poverty, Choices for the Labor Movement and the Politics of the University. Registration: \$80 for room, board and materials. Travel scholarships available. Call or write: IDS Youth Conference, 15 Dutch St., New York, NY 10038. (212) 962-0390.

INDIANA, PA

October 23-25

Education and Ideology Symposium; "American Dreams: The National Debate about the Future of Education" Conservatives, liberals and radicals debate the relationship of American education to American democracy. Featured Debaters: Phyllis Schlafly vs. Eleanor Smeal; Chester Finn vs. Roxanne Bradshaw, Secretary-Treasurer NEA and former Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm vs. Stanley Aronowitz; Russell Kirk vs. Herbert Gintis and Kevin Ryan vs. Henry Giroux. Special Events: The San Francisco Mime Troupe performs "The Mozamgola Caper"; Abbie Hoffman on Activism. For information: American Dreams Symposium, School of Continuing Education, IUP, Indiana, PA 15705; (412) 357-2227.



Twentieth Century Fox

BATTLE OF THE Supermoms

By Pat Aufderheide

FOR YEARS, IT SEEMED IMPOSSIBLE to make a sequel to *Alien*, the blockbuster science fiction suspense drama. But director-scriptwriter James Cameron's gone it one better, with a movie that magnificently exploits the contradictions of high-tech corporate society. It grabs you by the throat and never lets go, but you never feel pumelled in that *Raiders of the Lost Ark* way. In a movie full of hardware, human drama stays at the center of the story.

Or perhaps one should say, the struggle to stay human. Can Ripley (Sigourney Weaver), who as heroine of *Alien* fought off both human and android representatives of The Company to protect humanity from an invasion of alien parasites, do it again? The enemy is once again double: The Company and the aliens. Now the challenge has multiplied.

Ripley is rescued after floating 57 years in space, to discover that in her absence The Company has set up a nuclear-powered colony on the alien-infested planet. She returns, in the company of a pathologic unit of Marines and even sicker company rep (Paul Reiser), to find a lone child survivor (Carrie Henn) and lots and lots of aliens.

She has trouble, and the worst of it lurks back home, setting the terms for her human companionship. The Marines have the false confidence—or controlled stupidity—taught them by basic training. And the company man has turned himself into a moral android.

Faced with destroying the colony's infrastructure (the colonists have all been incorporated into the alien mega-organism), the company man's answer is simple: "This site has a substantial dollar value," he says in

bland corporate newsspeak. As aliens sneak among the crew, he proposes to cut a deal with Ripley: split the profits from bringing back a new "bioweapon." The horror isn't just in his decisions, but in his cool let's-

have-lunch, business-as-usual style.

It's ultimate macabre humor. We know, along with Ripley, the terms of the science fiction movie: it's humans vs. aliens. But this guy in his Brooks Brothers suit doesn't. He thinks it's all about the survival of The Company. And the joke's on us, because his priorities end up setting ours.

The front pages of the newspapers have laid out this problem for us—Johns Manville and asbestosis, A.H. Robins and the Dalkon Shield, nuclear dumps and acid rain policy. *Aliens* makes the clash between corporate and social priorities the stuff of science fiction, and gives it a face that chooses to be faceless.

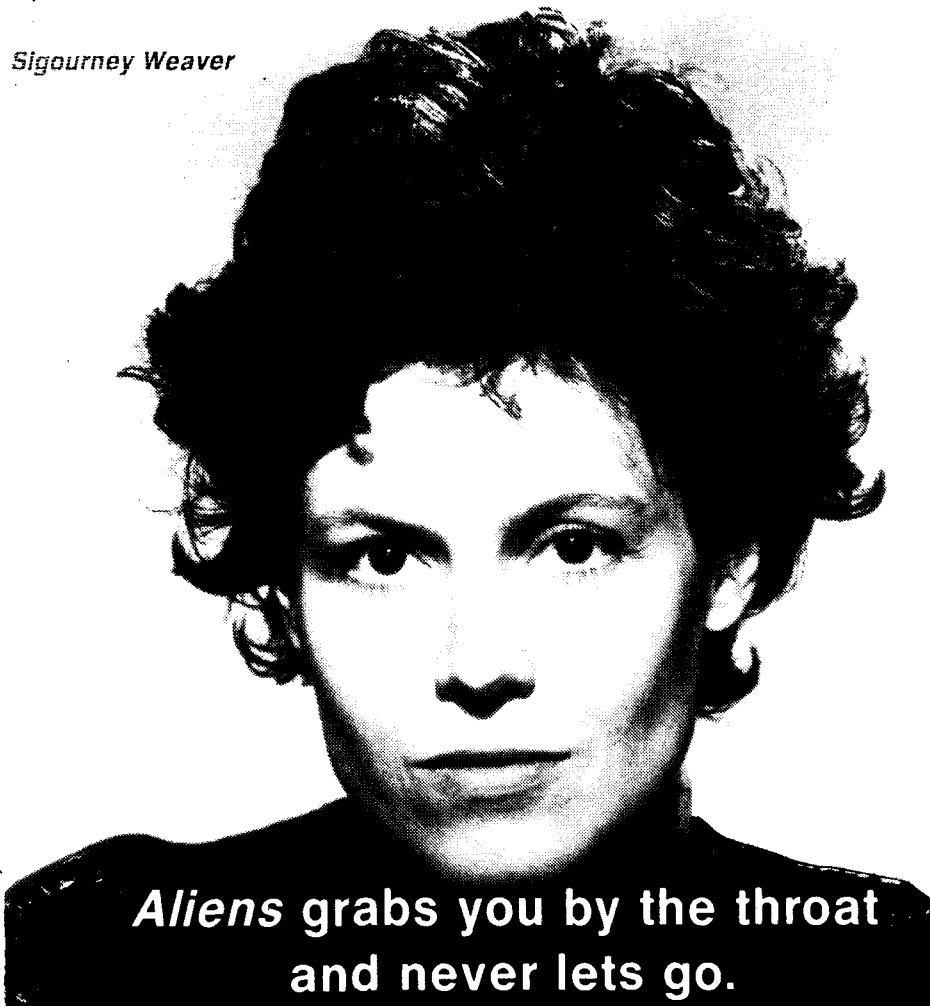
In the original film the clinker in the outfit was the android, who'd been programmed by The Company to bring back the alien species at all costs to the crew. But the sequel's android (Lance Hendricksen) has been meta-programmed to respect human life above all. So disrespect for human life is left to humans.

This is the special genius of the long-pondered but many-time-foundered sequel. Cameron—who invented the Terminator and did the original script for *Rambo* (in which the hero was a psychopath)—builds drama from the ability of individuals to exercise their free will in order to become less than human.

Aliens, like its predecessor, is a work of high-tech pop art (both Cameron and Ridley Scott, director of the original, are art designers first). The harsh blue, purple and silver look, the elaborately elegant machin-

Continued on page 23

Sigourney Weaver



**Aliens grabs you by the throat
and never lets go.**

Twentieth Century Fox

Aliens

Continued from page 24

ery, the massive grinding gearshift noises of the human-engineered world contrasts with the dank, earthy colors, birth imagery and dripping, panting sounds of the alien universe. The alien kids come in all shapes and sizes—threatening versions of sexual body parts (eggs, penises, vaginas) and horrific fetuses.

But unlike *Blade Runner* (another Ridley Scott spectacular), the design doesn't run away with the story. Instead, the environment becomes the expression of the double horror that keeps *Aliens* at your throat. The fascinated horror of the body (especially that of the female and the all-demanding infant) that the aliens evoke is matched by the fascinated horror of the machine that engulfs its human creators.

Grunts of the future

One of the glories of the original *Alien* was its portrayal of alienated workers on a scuzzy factory-ship of the future, where the glamor of space has become the grumbling reality of workplace exploitation and irritation. Cameron takes this a step further, too.

The Company hasn't improved a whit in the 57 years Weaver's been floating in space, as we learn from the opening scene. Clunking men in spacesuits chisel into the

abandoned hulk to discover Ripley and her cat still alive. Their response? "There goes our salvage, guys." When Ripley recovers enough to describe her experience, The Company boardroom execs censure her for destroying their \$43 million ship, and reward her with a grunt job at the unloading dock.

The Marines are the few, the proud and the unbelievably dumb. *Aliens* is the season's answer to *Top Gun* and its glorification of military heroics. This crowd of warriors hasn't got a drop of saving curiosity about what happened to Ripley the first time out, and it costs most of them their lives. They've got courage, of a killing kind. The brave mostly die early, while one Marine's bravado dissolves into hysterics.

And yet you know this little band of trained killers, with their absurd confidence in high-tech weapons, aren't the enemy. They're victims of the system that trained them. They try hard to be the right tools for the job—whatever it is, and they don't want to know. In a crunch, though, they understand what Ripley does: that in the end, it's the survival of the human organism that's important. And that organism is not just a body, but the body social.

You get little hints of how they cope, carving out little spaces for human expression within their group role as robots: "They ain't payin' us enough for this," one groans as they come awake after hyperspace. "Fly the Friendly Skies," another says in an at-

tempt to put a personal stamp on a com-modified culture. The woman Marine, Private Vasquez (Jenette Goldstein) is especially poignant for her superb physical control and fierce loyalty. This odd lot of fighters has wit and energy, all applied to the task of living with their good-soldier role. And this is no time for robots.

Ripley is the one adult who still owns herself. And that's why she's left with the last third of the picture, where the human challenge has been liquidated by the alien threat, leaving Ripley and the android in charge of Saving Us All.

Momism

We're used to having a chase scene wind up a dramatic narrative, after umpteen-billion episodes of cop dramas on TV. But a 40-minute chase scene, even with the enormous technical and art design resources poured into this extravaganza, might have been, well, excessive. Except that Cameron pulls out the most ancient trick of all to carry us through: mother knows best.

And he's given us two of them.

The last third of the movie is a battle of the moms: Ripley as a sort of Glinda the Good, a single-mother (unsullied by sex, as per our expectations of our heroic women), protector of humanity in the shape of that tough little girl, pitted against the Evil Witch of Outer Space, the Queen Bee of the alien nest. The alien Big Mama is a kind of pterodactyl cum snake, a prehistoric

version of the life force. In the face-down battle, Ripley cleverly attacks not the mother but her children with her flame thrower—and it works.

Both are engaged in an irrational, biologically-driven fight to defend their larger organisms. Ripley, when she thinks about it, is none too sure she's making the right decision. As she says midway through the film to the corporate slime Burke, "I don't know which species is worse—you don't see them fucking each other over for a god-damned percentage!" But when push comes to shove, she shouts at Big Mama, about to engulf the little girl, "Get away from her, you bitch!"

Ripley's the lone female hero in the recent spate of action films. But this is no triumph for the feminism that strove to create ways for men and women to live differently together in a more just world. In fact, the movie's solution to the double threat facing Ripley depends on an ancient fear and awe of women. It's no accident that Ripley's new charge is a little girl, tougher even when she's clutching her doll than the gritty Marines.

Cameron's vividly captured the contradictions of a world run on short-term successful, long-term death-dealing priorities. To resolve the contradictions, he resorted to the ultimate fallback position of the culture: in the end, the women will save us, whether we deserve it or not.

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